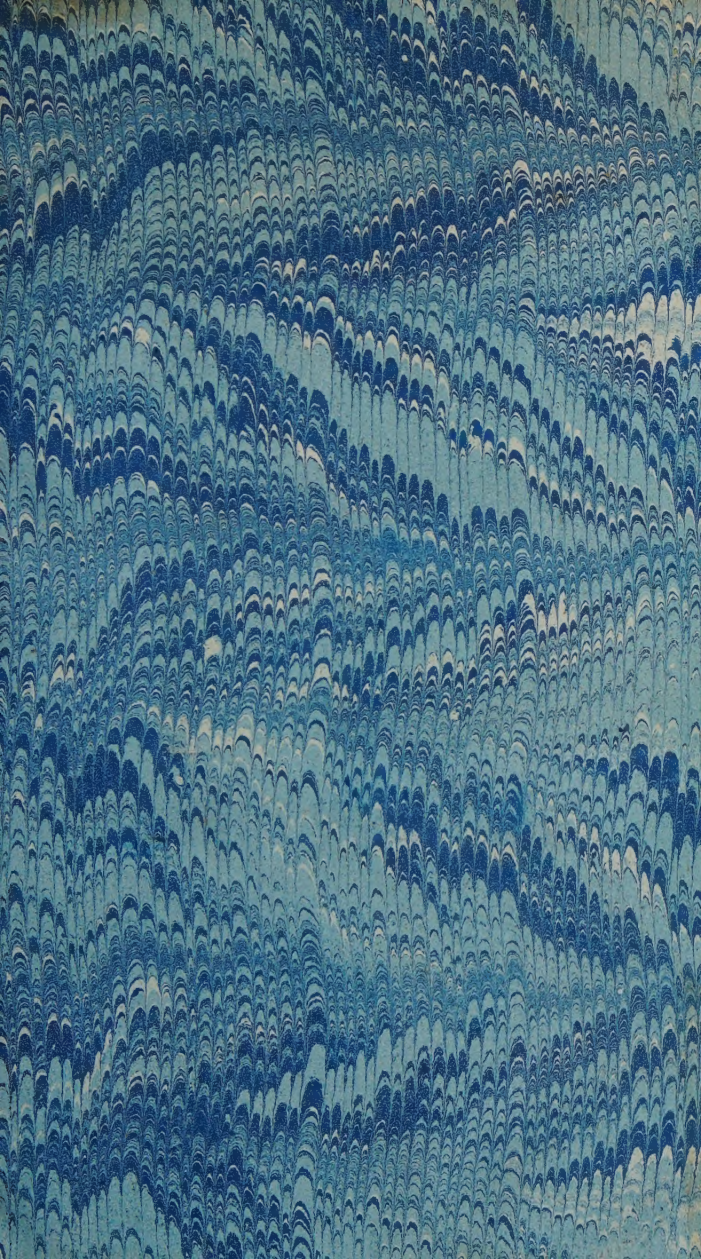


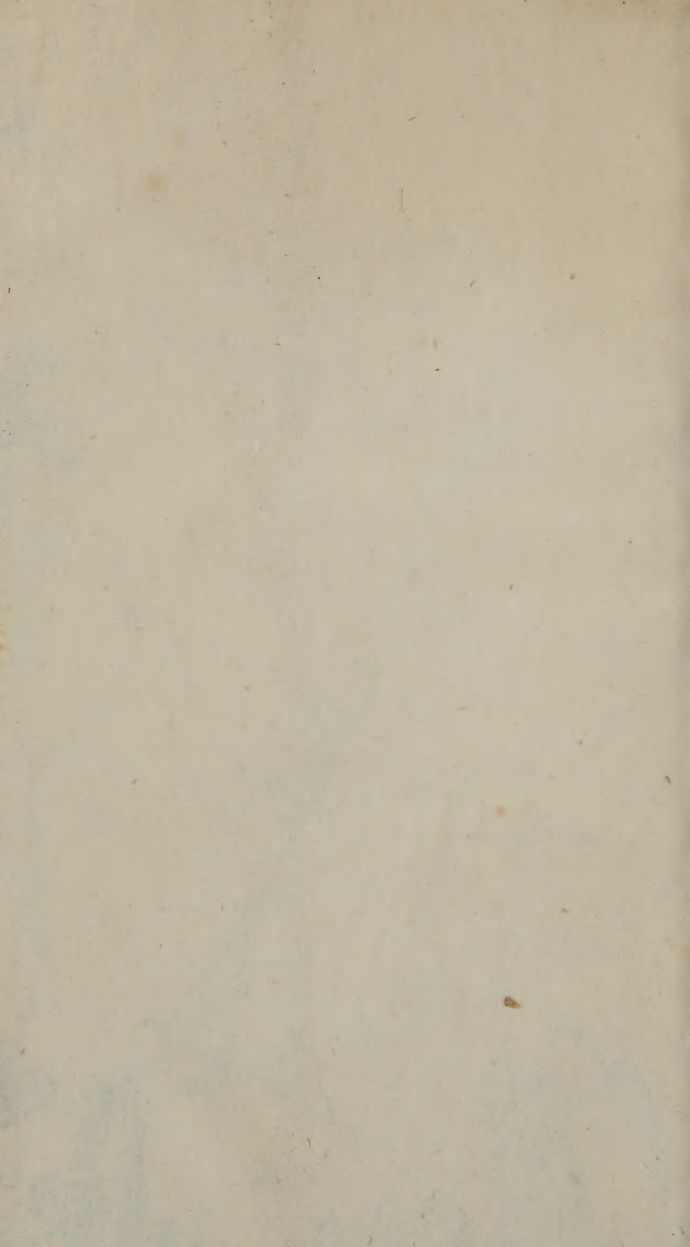




BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA













THE  
**Bible Christian :**  
DESIGNED TO ADVOCATE  
THE  
**SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE,**  
AND THE  
**RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT,**  
IN MATTERS OF FAITH.

---

VOL. II.

---

BELFAST:  
PUBLISHED BY S. ARCHER, HIGH-STREET.  
PRINTED BY J. SMYTH.

---

1831.





X 288.4  
B 349  
v. 2

# INDEX TO VOL. II.

|                                                                                                                         | PAGE.     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Address of Antrim Presbytery to Dr. Bruce, ... ..                                                                       | 239       |
| — of the Cork Unitarians, to Rammohun Roy, ... ..                                                                       | 282       |
| — of the General Synod to the Churches, ... ..                                                                          | 145       |
| — of the Munster and Remonstrant Synods, and<br>Presbytery of Antrim, to the Lord Lieutenant,<br>with the Reply, ... .. | 42        |
| — to Trinitarians, ... ..                                                                                               | 76        |
| America, Presbyterianism in, ... ..                                                                                     | 138       |
| Association, American Unitarian, ... ..                                                                                 | 265       |
| — British and Foreign Unitarian, ... ..                                                                                 | 235       |
| — Proceedings of the Scottish Unitarian, ... ..                                                                         | 482       |
| — for the Protection of the Rights of Conscience, ... ..                                                                | 288       |
| Atonement, a Summary of the leading statements made<br>by Dr. Carpenter, ... ..                                         | 257       |
| Authenticity of Scripture, ... ..                                                                                       | 105       |
| Bible, on the, ... ..                                                                                                   | 486       |
| Bruce, Dr. Retirement of, ... ..                                                                                        | 46        |
| — and the First Presbyterian congregation, Belfast,                                                                     | 284       |
| — Address of Antrim Presbytery to, ... ..                                                                               | 239       |
| Calumnious Attack of " <i>The Orthodox Presbyterian</i> ," on<br>Messrs. Mitchel, Blakely, and Montgomery, ... ..       | 476       |
| Calvinism, effect of, on the Evidences of Christianity, ... ..                                                          | 200       |
| — Inconsistencies of, ... ..                                                                                            | 72        |
| Candid Inquirer, ... ..                                                                                                 | 525       |
| — Answer to, ... ..                                                                                                     | 540       |
| Christ, concerning the Nature of, ... ..                                                                                | 128       |
| — on the Nature and Dignity of, ... ..                                                                                  | 411       |
| — on the Titles of, ... ..                                                                                              | 11        |
| — Reply to an Inquirer, concerning the Nature of,                                                                       | 160       |
| Christian, why are you a? ... ..                                                                                        | 527       |
| Church, Reply to a member of the Established, ... ..                                                                    | 104       |
| Congregation, Clough, ... ..                                                                                            | 240       |
| — First, Belfast, and Dr. Bruce, ... ..                                                                                 | 284       |
| Conscience, Association for the Protection of the Rights of,                                                            | 288       |
| Consistency, a Plea for, addressed to Unitarians, ... ..                                                                | 403       |
| Continental Society, ... ..                                                                                             | 380       |
| Correspondents, 95, 144, 192, 241, 338, 388, 436 ... ..                                                                 | 574       |
| Death, Lines on, ... ..                                                                                                 | 513       |
| — on the Punishment of, ... ..                                                                                          | 303       |
| Depravity, on Hereditary, ... ..                                                                                        | 41        |
| Drummond, Dr. and Rev. J. Carlile, ... ..                                                                               | 483       |
| — His Synodical Sermon, ... ..                                                                                          | 30        |
| Editor, Letter to, from a Friend, and observations on same,                                                             | 81        |
| Elder, an aged, and the General Synod, ... ..                                                                           | 1, 49, 97 |
| Essay, on the Knowledge of the only True God, ... ..                                                                    | 95        |
| — on the Trinity, by A. Stewart, Esq., ... ..                                                                           |           |

22798

|                                                                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Established Church, reply to a member of, .. ..                                      | 104       |
| Evangelical Retaliation, ... ..                                                      | 533       |
| External Forms and Institutions of Religion, on attention to, ... ..                 | 279       |
| Faith, Duty, and Charity, sentiments of a Lady on, ...                               | 368       |
| Fasts, on Public, ... ..                                                             | 193       |
| Gift of Tongues, ... ..                                                              | 547       |
| God and Christ, Scripture Teachings respecting, ...                                  | 142       |
| God, Essay on the Knowledge of the only True, ..                                     | 1, 49, 97 |
| — on the Public Worship of, ... ..                                                   | 298       |
| — Tempteth not man, ... ..                                                           | 318       |
| — His will be done, .. ..                                                            | 298       |
| Gospel, the, and Law, Lines on, ... ..                                               | 94        |
| Grace, on the word, ... ..                                                           | 153       |
| Human Nature, on the depravity of, ... ..                                            | 111       |
| Improvement, Duty of, ... ..                                                         | 514       |
| Instruction, Early Religious, ... ..                                                 | 205, 507  |
| Intelligence, 95, 144, 184, 189, 190, 282, 284, 288, 326, 388, 428, 482, 529, ... .. | 573       |
| Irving, the Rev. Edward, his prophets and prophetesses,                              | 483       |
| Law, the, and Gospel, lines on, ... ..                                               | 94        |
| Letters to the Presbyterians of Ireland, ... 19, 116, 359, 454,                      |           |
| Letter to the Editor from a Friend, and the Editor's observations on same, ... ..    | 30        |
| — to the Editor by Melancthon, ... ..                                                | 418       |
| — to the Theological Students of the Belfast Institution, ... ..                     | 212       |
| — to a Literary Lady, ... 241, 289, 369,                                             |           |
| — Notice of the Rev. J. M'Callister's to Lord Templeton, ... ..                      | 140       |
| — by Mrs. Savage, of Wrenburywood, England,                                          | 178       |
| — by the Rev. J. Edgar, .. ..                                                        | 428       |
| — to the Rev. J. Edgar, ... ..                                                       | 497       |
| — to the Rev. R. Magill, ... ..                                                      | 495       |
| — to the Rev. D. Whyte, with his Reply, ... ..                                       | 521       |
| — genuine, from a young Unitarian to an old Calvinist,                               | 349       |
| — Review of, to a Literary Lady, ... 359, 457,                                       |           |
| Learning, on the use of Human in Religious Inquiries,                                | 38        |
| Lines on the death of Rev. J. Manning, ... ..                                        | 563       |
| Liverpool, a Sunday in, Rev. J. Hincks, .. ..                                        | 106       |
| Luke, xxii. 36; ... ..                                                               | 424       |
| Man, God tempteth not, ... ..                                                        | 318       |
| Melancthon, letter by, to the Editor, ... ..                                         | 418       |
| Memoirs of Abbe Gregoire, ... ..                                                     | 425       |
| — of Rev. J. Manning, ... ..                                                         | 558       |
| — of Rev. Philip Taylor, ... ..                                                      | 552       |
| Missions, ... ..                                                                     | 415       |

|                                                                                                                                                       |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Nature of Christ, Reply to an Inquirer concerning the,                                                                                                | 160      |
| ----- and Dignity of Christ, by Joanna Baillie,                                                                                                       | 411      |
| ----- Human, Depravity of, ... ..                                                                                                                     | 111      |
| Newton, Sir Isaac. Note to the Biographical account of,<br>by Dr. Thomson, ... ..                                                                     | 296      |
| Obituary,—Rev. J. Hincks, 96 ;—Mr. Patterson, —<br>----- Mrs. Hyndman,—Mr. Sloan,—Rev. A. Neilson,<br>Mrs. Beatty, 288 ;—Miss Parker, 436 ; Mr. Boyd. |          |
| Opinions, on Religious, ... ..                                                                                                                        | 171      |
| Original Sin,... ..                                                                                                                                   | 175, 250 |
| Orthodoxy and Inspiration, . . . . .                                                                                                                  | 547      |
| “ Orthodox Presbyterian,” and Messrs. J. Mitchel, F.<br>Blakely, and H. Montgomery, ... ..                                                            | 476      |
| Persecution for conscience’ sake, ... ..                                                                                                              | 17       |
| Plea for consistency, addressed to Unitarians, ... ..                                                                                                 | 403      |
| Porter, Rev. J. Scott, and First Congregation, Belfast,                                                                                               | 436      |
| Prayer, ... ..                                                                                                                                        | 297      |
| Preaching, on Controversial, ... ..                                                                                                                   | 389      |
| ----- on Evangelical, ... ..                                                                                                                          | 225      |
| Presbyterianism in America, ... ..                                                                                                                    | 138      |
| Presbyterians of Ireland, Letters to, ... 19, 116, 359,                                                                                               | 454      |
| Prison, Spirits in, ... ..                                                                                                                            | 156      |
| Protestant, why are you a ? ... ..                                                                                                                    | 527      |
| Public Fasts, ... ..                                                                                                                                  | 193      |
| Publications, notice of new, ... ..                                                                                                                   | 388      |
| Question, an answer to the,—Why do you go to the Uni-<br>tarian Meeting-house ? ... ..                                                                | 91       |
| ----- Why are you a Christian ? ... ..                                                                                                                | 527      |
| ----- Why are you a Protestant ? ... ..                                                                                                               | ib.      |
| Rammohun Roy, ... ..                                                                                                                                  | 235      |
| ----- Address of the Cork Unitarians to,                                                                                                              | 282      |
| Readers, Address to, ... ..                                                                                                                           | 570      |
| Redemption, Hints on Christian, ... ..                                                                                                                | 260      |
| Religion, on Attention to External Forms of, ... ..                                                                                                   | 279      |
| ----- for the Bed of Death, Unitarianism, a... ..                                                                                                     | 378      |
| ----- on Condemning those who disagree with us<br>in matters of ... ..                                                                                | 512      |
| ----- on the Essentials and Fundamentals of, ... ..                                                                                                   | 130      |
| Religious Inquiries, on the use of Human Learning in,                                                                                                 | 38       |
| ----- Instruction, on Early, ... ..                                                                                                                   | 205      |
| Remonstrant Synod, Meeting of, ... ..                                                                                                                 | 428      |
| ----- Address to, from Ladies of Warren-<br>point congregation, ... ..                                                                                | 531      |
| ----- Recognition of, by Government, ... ..                                                                                                           | 529      |
| Reply, the Rev. David Watson’s, to Dr. Cooke, ... ..                                                                                                  | 326      |
| Retaliation, on Evangelical, ... ..                                                                                                                   | 533      |
| Review of Lord King’s life of Locke, ... ..                                                                                                           | 216      |
| ----- of Letters to a Literary Lady, ... ..                                                                                                           | 339, 437 |
| ----- of a Sermon, by the Rev. H. Ware, ... ..                                                                                                        | 514      |



|                                                              |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Scripture, Authenticity of ... ..                            | 105 |
| ——— Teachings respecting God and Christ ... ..               | 142 |
| Sermon, Rev. D. Davidson's, on the Diffusion of Truth,       | 232 |
| Sin, Original ... ..                                         | 175 |
| Slavery, ... ..                                              | 63  |
| Society, Christian Tract, London ... ..                      | 189 |
| ——— Continental, ... ..                                      | 580 |
| ——— Irish Unitarian, Anniversary of ... ..                   | 184 |
| ——— Unitarian, for the Diffusion of Christian Know-          |     |
| ledge, ... ..                                                | 190 |
| Spirits in Prison, ... ..                                    | 156 |
| Students, Letter to the Theological, of Belfast Institution, | 212 |
| Subscribers Notice to, ... ..                                | 48  |
| Summary of Unitarian Principles, ... ..                      | 408 |
| Sunday-school Readings, ... .. 397, 467,                     | 565 |
| Supper, On the Lord's, ... ..                                | 87  |
| Synod, Address of the General to the Churches, ... ..        | 145 |
| ——— the General, and an aged Elder, ... ..                   | 81  |
| ——— Meeting of Remonstrant, ... ..                           | 428 |
| Synods, Address of Munster, Antrim, and Remonstrant, to      |     |
| the Lord Lieutenant, with the Reply, ... ..                  | 42  |
| Temple of the Heart, Lines on, ... ..                        | 558 |
| Tittles of Christ, ... ..                                    | 11  |
| Tract Society, Publications of the London Christian, ...     | 189 |
| ——— Report of, ... ..                                        | 274 |
| Transylvania, Unitarianism in, ... ..                        | 419 |
| Trinity, Belief in, incompatible with belief in the truth of |     |
| Scripture, ... ..                                            | 164 |
| ——— Essay on, by A. Stewart, Esq., ... ..                    | 95  |
| Trinitarians, an Address to, ... ..                          | 76  |
| Unitarian Association, British and Foreign, ... ..           | 235 |
| ——— Fifth Annual Report of the Ameri-                        |     |
| can, ... ..                                                  | 265 |
| ——— Proceedings of the Scottish, ... ..                      | 482 |
| Unitarian Society, Anniversary of the Irish, ... ..          | 184 |
| ——— Society for the diffusion of Christian Knowledge,        | 190 |
| ——— Tract Society, ... ..                                    | 95  |
| ——— Meeting-house, an answer to the Question, why            |     |
| do you go to the ? ... ..                                    | 91  |
| ——— Principles, Summary of, .. ..                            | 408 |
| ——— Letter from a young, to an old Calvinist, ... ..         | 349 |
| Unitarians, a plea for consistency, addressed to, ... ..     | 403 |
| Unitarianism in Glasgow, ... ..                              | 144 |
| ——— in Transylvania, ... ..                                  | 419 |
| ——— a Religion for the Bed of Death, ... ..                  | 378 |
| Watson. the Rev. David, and Dr. Cooke, ... ..                | 526 |
| Will, God's be done, ... ..                                  | 298 |
| Worship, on the Public, of God, .. ..                        | 298 |

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

---

No. I.

FEBRUARY, 1832.

VOL. III.

---

Two Volumes of the *Bible Christian* are now before the public, and it is with no small degree of pleasure we enter upon our labours for the third year. We beg to renew our acknowledgments to our Readers and Correspondents, for the steady encouragement our little Work has met with since its commencement. We never made any great professions; and our principal object, in projecting our publication, was to defend those who reject *human authority* in matters of religion, and to contend for the BIBLE, and the BIBLE only, as a perfect rule of faith and practice. Our views have opened as our periodical has proceeded; and if other objects have been added to those originally proposed, we have been compelled to notice them by the unprovoked attacks which have been made upon our principles, and by the shameful appeals which have been made to the passions and prejudices of the thoughtless against our intentions.

While reputed orthodoxy is erecting her many heads; and raising her voice, both in known and unknown tongues, in defence of the mysterious dogmas, to which the corruptions of the plain and pure truths of christianity gave birth, and which were brought to maturity during the dark ages, and still form the creed of the unthinking multitude, (who will not receive a Bible Christian into communion unless he profess to submit to their human articles and overtures,) the friends of the unadulterated Gospel ought not to be silent. They must prepare to follow their great Master, through good, and through evil report. In spite of the calumnies of those, whose interest it is to frighten the ignorant, by forcing the Bible upon one church *without note or comment*, whilst they are binding another church to *their interpretations of it*; and in spite of the lukewarmness and indifference of others, who wish to "think with the wise, but who act with the vulgar," we will be found at our post:—

we will be found the consistent advocates of the great principle, which promotes the liberty and happiness of man in this life, and prepares him for the endless felicity of the next,—the reception of “the glorious Gospel of the blessed God,” free from human dictation.

We commence the first Number of our Third Volume, with a well tempered article on *Education*, by our unknown correspondent A.; without, however, identifying ourselves with his views; but promising to direct our Readers’ attention to the subject on some future occasion.

EDITORS.

---

#### STATE OF IRELAND.—EDUCATION.

WE live in troubled times:—we have by the decree of the most High been appointed for our sojourn on earth, in an age which seems pregnant with wonders.—On one side, we are threatened with all the evils of civil commotion, from the bad passions and ambitious thoughts of man: on another, we are menaced with the displeasure of Heaven, which, wearied out with our crimes and follies,—seems about to cast upon us, ruin, desolation, and disease. And yet dark as may be the prospect, presented to us, in the present dangerous state, of our hitherto prosperous empire,—all reflecting men,—all whose minds are neither warped by passion nor by prejudice, must regard the rapid progress of the lower classes, in information, and useful knowledge, as the sun-mark of future prosperity to the nation, and of happiness to individuals. Ireland alone seems to be dragging on a cheerless existence. Her rational children are indulging in hopes,—are looking earnestly forward to events, which the violence of party, and sectarian disputes, are exerting their utmost powers to render abortive. The wrath of man is at all times destructive, and our own poor country has sufficiently experienced its lamentable consequences. She has been doomed, it would seem, to continued endurance of the evils arising out of sectarian bitterness,—or civil broils. No sooner has the sword been laid aside,—no sooner has peace begun to reign, and the people of the land to rest from their troubles, than as an effectual barrier

against improvement, Religion is introduced, in many cases as an instrument of blood,—at all times as an excitement to revenge, to enmity,—and to the indulgence of every evil passion. Thus is the best gift of God to man, of no avail, to advance his happiness: christianity instead of being an instrument of peace,—instead of leading men from wickedness, and folly, is made the watchword for every deed, that can disgrace humanity.

In illustration of these remarks I need not direct attention to any particular part of the moral, political or religious history of our native Isle.—Our circumstances are unfortunately such, that facts supporting them, are daily forced, and by their deeply interesting nature, impressed upon our memories. It is sufficient for us, to enquire, what is the source of that state of things which all so bitterly lament?—and from this, proceed to show, in some of its general principles at least, the reasonableness, nay, the *humanity* of the new system of National Education for Ireland,—a system, which by one party, with whom too our own sympathies are strongly interwoven, has been condemned, and railed at as “a perfect abomination.”

The present situation of Ireland is really deplorable. It is true indeed, that, from the peculiarity of our circumstances, dwelling in the most enlightened quarter of the country, we in Ulster are secured from the evils that prevail to such a dreadful extent in the southren provinces. We feel not, but we hear, and hear with horror, of cruelties and murders, and assassinations, not marked more by their culpability, their deep enormity, than by the coolness and daring demeanour of the perpetrators. Presuming however, on the pre-acquaintance of our readers with these matters, we turn from the effect, to the cause,—a cause which we do really and sincerely believe, a system of National Education like the present, *in general principles* at least, *if properly acted upon*, to be well calculated to remove.

For the source of these horrors, we have not far to seek:—we find it, as we might well expect, in the great *ignorance* of the people, united to *want* and *poverty*, the destructive influence of every one of which, is to a ten thousand fold degree, encreased by factions, that are at once religious and political. Our native Isle was at one time peculiarly distinguished on account of



the successful enquires of her sons, into all the knowledge of the early ages, and for the tranquil state, into which this had brought her, assisted by a Religion, as yet unpolluted, and untinged by superstition, whose holiness had not yet become obscured by the traditions of vain humanity. But where now is all this happiness? this freedom from the evils of faction? It has fled, and we fear never to return: for never will this land be saved from the terrors under which her people now groan, which threaten her destruction, and are even now forcing from the homes of their fathers, thousands of the best and bravest,—the most enlightened, and the most patriotic of her sons,—until present ignorance and barbarism yield to the influence of knowledge. Here we have a land blessed with peculiar gifts by the Creator,—marked out as if for the residence of a favoured people, presenting all the natural advantage, which one could desire in this country, and yet this, the evil passions of men, have turned into a desert full of danger and of death.

It is not enough, however, that these evils should have existed for so lengthened a period,—they must if possible be protracted, in despite of consequences, lest some few political leaders, whose watchword too is RELIGION! should lose a little of their political power, and be curbed in their domineering spirit. Party has hitherto, by the jealousy it inspires, rendered every attempt nugatory, which had for its object the extension of knowledge among the mass of the community. The Kildare-street Society was established avowedly for this purpose, and we would give its conductors full credit for their anxiety, and their conscientious labours in the discharge of their important duties, but from the peculiar circumstances of the great majority of the people, it was found inadequate to accomplish the purposes intended. The teachers, we will grant, in almost every instance acted with due integrity, but still such a fear of proselytism remained in the minds of the Catholic Clergy, and their people, as opposed an effectual barrier against the success of the Society, in their really laudable designs. The number of scholars was great, but these were in a great measure Protestant, and hence the benefit of the government grant, were chiefly confined to one class of religionists. After a series of

years the mass of the people remain in almost the same state of ignorance: and in some cases, time seems to have but demoralized them the more, showing in still plainer language, the miseries attendant on ignorance.

In offering a few remarks tending to remove some of the objections that seem to be entertained against the *general principles* of the Bill of Mr. Wyse, as referred to in the letter of the Right Hon. E. G. Stanley, the chief Secretary for Ireland,—with sweeping denunciations of which too, some of our papers and periodicals now swarm, it is unnecessary to be very minute. It is sufficient for us to observe, that it advocates the election of a committee of *six* persons, of different denominations of christians, in which there has been an endeavour, as far as possible, to balance parties; to which committee the varied powers are given, with respect to the election of teachers, and to the appointing, or the composing of books adapted for the moral, and literary instruction of the rising generation. It seems to be a fundamental principle of this system, that the Scriptures are not to be used as a *common* school book, either with, or without note or comment; that those portions of them, which are calculated to afford sound moral instruction, without the slightest bearing upon controversy, may be used in their stead, so that there may be every facility afforded to the increase of knowledge, amidst those classes which are now sunk in misery, and in crime.

The first thing here deserving of attention is, the Committee. Its *motley garb* having caught their fancies, has been with our clever penmen, a means of calling out peculiar corruscations, and sallies of imaginary wit. Our time is unfortunately too limited to give samples, and indeed we refer to it merely to warn others from the like, by reminding them of a very serious fact—for somehow we are partial to facts—that it is only a Committee selected from various denominations of Christians, that, in the present circumstances of Ireland, can at all be fitted for superintending a system of National Education. Much violence has been showered against the present one; but its opponents seem to me to have taken a very prejudiced view of the subject, for, let me ask, what would they have?—a Committee all Protestants?—facts put it beyond a doubt that this would never answer the purpose intended. If there really be a

desire to increase the knowledge of the people, and to raise them from their present state of barbarism, a system of National Education must be adopted, and we see not, unless its managers be of different denominations, how it could possibly be rendered available in opposition to the present alarmingly destructive, and demoralizing spirit of party. The Presbyterians of Ulster are called upon in the loudest tones,—by all their fears of *Papistry*,—of *Unitarianism*, and of course of *Infidelity*,—in fact, by every evil, real or imaginary, that could by any means be forced into opposition to this conciliatory measure,—“*to taste not, to handle not;*” whilst any man of common sense must see, and every man of common honesty must confess, the absolute necessity which exists for giving the means of education to the lower classes, and he must know that it is by an union of men of various sects, and by mutual forbearance, that this can alone be obtained. If Roman Catholics willingly yield a little of their prejudices, surely, if any thing is to be effected, Protestants must act in a similar manner? And is it not strange, that when a tempting opportunity is thus afforded for Christians to act in concert,—to unite for the attaining of certain good, and to overthrow the sectarian spirit, that now prevails, to the prevention of all improvement,—is it not strange, we humbly repeat, that when hopes such as these are placed before the friends of Christianity and of peace, with an almost certainty of accomplishment, that even these, the professing friends of Religion, should suffer themselves to be borne away on the tide of Party, rather than forget past causes of anger, in the hope of an almost certain good?

We proceed however, briefly, to comment upon the great objection, which has been started against this system of Education, and which has obtained for it every calumnious epithet: I refer to the principle, that the Bible is not to be classed along with ordinary school-books. In order to avoid, in this place, any thing merely speculative, or any thing, about which a difference of opinion could well exist, let us fix our attention steadfastly upon facts: these, unhappily for the peace of Ireland, and the welfare of her children, are too favourable to our views, to require high colouring. During the period in which the Kildare Street Society

was carrying on its operations, the Bible was used "without note or comment,—which," say the opposers of the present system, or of *the Experiment*, as it has been termed, "is all that we demand." But let me ask, when the Scriptures were used in the days of the Kildare-street Society, what was the result? Keep to facts, and is not this the simple truth,—that scarcely one School was attended by the Roman Catholic children? Is it not a fact, that in consequence of the Bible having been introduced without note or comment, the great mass of the people remain in the same state of ignorance, and of moral degradation, as before? How then, can he, that is influenced by a sincere desire for the welfare of his fellow Christians,—their welfare whether in time or in eternity—refuse his assent to the adoption of a system which, in its general outline, bears so much the appearance of utility; especially when that for which he contends, was marked by so complete a failure?

Formerly Roman Catholic Children were, in most cases, forbidden to attend; but with the present system there cannot be a fear of proselytism; and those thousands, who are now by their ignorance, prevented from attaining some of the sweetest consolations and joys of religion, will, we trust, be so carefully attended to, that in a short time, multitudes now in sin, may, from a knowledge of the Scriptures—which before they could not have read—and from a reflection upon the sacred, simple truths of the Gospel, be filled with a new spirit, so that leaving their old ways, they may turn unto God in repentance. That which is, next to the necessities of the body, most required, is EDUCATION. Give the people this, and you confer upon them a lasting obligation. You thus enable the people to read the Scriptures for themselves, and profit by their contents, and you open up to them manifold avenues to pleasure. But reflect, I beseech you, that in offering this Education, if a stumbling-block be placed at the threshold, is not all converted into a mockery? Just suppose, for an instant, the case to be reversed: suppose that your Catholic brethren had on their side all the power, and all the influence, and that you were seeking the means of Education at their hands: how would you act, were they to offer books of their own, and teachers of their



own selection, as means of instruction ; and these too, being not only tinctured with foul heresies, but you being deprived of the least right to declare your opinion, or have it adopted ? Be honest in your answer, and act as your conscience dictates. Rather than send your offspring to such schools, in such circumstances, when you would have no authority in electing the teacher, or preventing a possibility of attempts to proselytize, you would certainly be inclined to let your children remain in ignorance. Why then wonder at the conduct of your Roman Catholic brethren ? and why insult them with an offer of Education, when you too well know that the offer is coupled with a proviso, that converts the favour into an insult ?

But it may be said, that I forget that *all* who desire to avail themselves of the means of Education, are not Catholics ; that a very considerable number is composed of Protestants, and that surely I would not seek to prevent them from reading the Scriptures ? God forbid ; and may He pardon those, who, in opposing the proposed system of Education—if any such there be—have voluntarily shut their eyes against the truth, and thus given unfounded statements. This is far from being what we would have : we uphold that they should read the Bible ; and store up in their hearts, as imperishable treasures, the information it affords. But we do, decidedly say, let this be done in sober earnestness, far away from the noise and bustle of a school, where no good thought can be permanently fixed. The Scriptures must not be treated *lightly* : we must never let them be so used as to lower them to the level of any other book whatever, much less allow them to share the fate of school-books, lest all reverence for them be taken from us.

Common sense supports our view of the subject, which we think, every unprejudiced mind would readily adopt, as soon as understood. Let the child have books, the best that can be composed, to lead him on to knowledge, but which it will neither be a crime, nor a profanation, to treat with disrespect. But let the BIBLE, that which contains the words of eternal life—the glad tidings of salvation, which tells of peace proclaimed on earth, in the birth of Christ ; let this be reserved for the hours of the morning, or the evening sacrifice, when it can

not merely be *read*, but explained and illustrated, and enforced, in the words of those beings, on whom their offspring depend for every comfort under God; in whom every sweet and holy affection is centred, and surely we may then expect that its doctrines and precepts will sink deep into the heart, and form “a well of water, springing up into Everlasting Life.”

A.

---

### SELF CONVERSE.

WE are frequently exhorted in Scripture to honour the *Lord*: St. Peter admonishes us to honour all men, and Paul reminds us of the honour due to ourselves. Among the various ways by which we may honour *God*, we should look up to him as the witness of our thoughts, and regulate our conduct by his law. By the honour due to men are implied a respect for that nature, of which we jointly participate; a willingness to entertain as favourable an opinion of individuals, as their conduct will admit: and a deference for *their* good opinion of *us*. In honouring ourselves are included a respect for the dignity of our nature as modelled after the image of God, and for the honourable vocation, by which we are called, as disciples of Christ and heirs of immortality; and also a regard to our own good opinion.

If we could habitually honour God as we ought, any regard to the opinion of the world or respect for our own would be superfluous. The presence, authority and approbation of the Almighty would require no support from the countenance of his creatures.—His wisdom would be our infallible guide; his love our highest comfort; his approbation our most flattering inducement; and his power our best protection and surest reward. “If we could set the Lord always before us, we shall never be moved.” The hopes and fears, the flattery and calumny of the world would be equally indifferent to us. Even our own passions, appetites and opinions would be unable to warp us.

But as, unhappily, we are incapable of this habitual recollection of the presence of God and attention to his will, a respect for the opinion of mankind becomes an useful auxiliary to virtue; an auxiliary, however, that

must be employed with caution. We are not to consider either their praise or blame as infallible ; neither their opinions of individual persons and actions, nor their abstract notions of virtue and vice, wisdom and folly in general. Before we acquiesce in their decisions, we must, as they are fallible, weigh their abilities ; as they are ignorant, estimate their knowledge ; as they are vicious, duly inquire into their motives. But if we are so fortunate as to reside among a judicious, dispassionate and well principled people ; we may derive great benefit from their advice and example, their censure and their approbation ; and yet more from a virtuous and religious friend. Still their opinions are not decisive. As our neighbours are neither intimately acquainted with our principles and conduct, nor accountable for either, we must compare their sentiments with the will of God and our own convictions.

Respect for the calm determinations of our own minds is also only subsidiary to the law of God : but they should have greater influence than the opinion of the world, because, they must after all be our guide, and because we are responsible both for the operations of our minds and the conduct of our lives.

Reverence for this calm and dispassionate opinion must be an important principle ; and habitual attention to it an essential duty. Yet this is surely a most reasonable principle and a very easy duty. We are only required to make our own minds the arbiters of our conduct. This is, surely, a tribunal, to which we can feel no reluctance to appeal. Yet nothing more is required ; " Judge yourselves, and ye shall not be judged."

We cannot apprehend, that we shall judge ourselves too harshly : it may, however, be suspected that we may view our own conduct with too much partiality and indulgence ; but neither shall we have cause to complain of this extreme, if our hearts be consulted with fairness and candour. The secret delusion, self-flattery, presumption and pride of which we complain in others, and which we lament in ourselves, originate in not consulting our own minds at all. Instead of seriously and impartially taking our own opinion of ourselves, we are endeavouring to impose a fictitious character on the world ; and for want of inquiring what we think of ourselves, we are often deceived, and sometimes are the

only persons deceived. Thus in our personal appearance and dress, in accomplishments and learning, in moral conduct and religious worship, we rather ask ourselves, how will this appear to the world, than how will it appear to our own hearts; what advantage will it procure for ourselves or our friends, than how will our own minds be the better of it? We live too much in public, and too little alone. There are some abandoned people, that regard neither the opinion of the world nor their own; neither fear God, nor regard man; nor reverence themselves; and the generality of men are well enough satisfied with themselves, if the world is satisfied with them. One great benefit resulting from the censure of the world, and from frequently hearing the word of God, is, that they force us to look into ourselves. We then immediately see the truth and force of that maxim. "If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things." The danger is, lest we too loosely interpret the other branch of that text; "If our hearts condemn us not, then may we have confidence towards God:" and this will assuredly be the case, if we enter on this self-examination on false principles, or conduct in a defective manner. Thus, if we wish to reconcile ourselves to our sins, or to feel complacency at our proficiency in goodness; to dress out a pharisaical outside, negligent of the furniture within; to appear specious to man, indifferent all the while to the approbation of God; this is not to honour but to insult the rational and moral principle within us.

The principle of this reference, should be a desire of ascertaining our real character, and the true motives of our conduct. As the suppliant appealed from the prince when drunk, to the same prince when sober; so should we appeal from the fallacious decisions of our minds, while intoxicated with worldly passions, to the calm dispassionate sentence, of a silent, retired hour.

The manner in which we should conduct this appeal is not by asking ourselves, what the world thinks of our character and conduct; what appearance such an action or speech made in the eyes of the public or our friends; nor whether our behaviour is what commonly passes for honest, generous and humane; but, what has been the spring and secret motive of our conduct; why did we act or speak in such a manner in public or to our



friend : did this line of conduct, which is esteemed so honest, generous and humane, originate in simple honesty, generosity and humanity ; what other motives were mingled with these, and in what degrees : were they only such an alloy, as may be conceded to human frailty ; or did they convert the whole mass into base metal. It is humiliating to reflect, how seldom we act from a single motive ; and how much oftener we do so, in our evil actions than our good.

We may conceive a man holding such a conversation as this with himself : I am esteemed a fair man, worthy of implicit confidence both in pecuniary transactions and in affairs of friendship : a person, incapable of falsehood and deceit, for sake either of reputation or gain : a faithful friend, a kind relative, and a worthy member of society ; I am regular in attending on the offices of religion ; and I gain credit for piety and zeal, and I trust, not without reason ; I may be overrated by my friends, as I am undervalued by my enemies : but, as far as the hurry of business and the variety of other avocations allow me to consider my own character, I am not ashamed of it ; I am disposed to think, that the judgment of my friend is the nearer to the truth.

But then, this gross and general estimate has been confessedly formed hastily, in a round of business and pleasure and without much discrimination. Let me now descend to particulars. I am alone, no witness present. It would be equally absurd and imprudent, though not impossible to deceive myself—I should have too much respect for myself to attempt it. If I do I shall fall in my own esteem, think meanly of myself ; be more unwilling to renew this self-conference ; lose all self-knowledge, and presently forfeit the good opinion of the world as well as my own. Let me recollect then. When I gained so much credit for fair and upright dealing in such a transaction, was I conscious to myself of deserving it all ? Had I no view to future confidence, credit and profit ; no vanity ; no regard to the praise, which I obtained, would I have acted in the same manner without the interference of any of these motives ? Although in general what I say may be depended upon, and I should scorn to practice any artifice for sake of gain, am I equally secure against other temptations, such as pleasure or praise ? Did I not on

a particular occasion disguise and even falsify my sentiments on a subject of importance, on which men had a right to know my opinion; and on which I professed to deliver myself without reserve; and this to court the favour of an individual, a party, or the public? When my friend lately asked my opinion and advice, was I secretly influenced, in giving it, by an inordinate desire to please; by forwardness to display my own superiority, or by jealousy of his increasing popularity or wealth? I know that I am considered as a very affectionate relation, and a kind neighbour; but do you not remember, my soul, that I should once have been very well pleased if such a person had died, because I was to inherit his fortune, or a rich legacy; or that such another had failed in trade, because he was my rival; and that I did actually, though secretly, rejoice, when a very near and worthy kinsman died and left me in possession of a good estate. I am respected as a public spirited citizen, a truly patriotic and disinterested member of the community; but in this capacity I am open to the solicitation of so many unworthy motives, vanity, ambition, and self-interest; envy, jealousy, and malevolence, that I need not recapitulate the particular cases in which they operated: and I would rather freely confess than minutely dwell upon the irregularities and impurities of my secret thoughts, and the unholy sentiments which intrude even on my devotions; though all the while I pass for a person of consummate purity and piety.

No man can hold a conversation of this kind with himself, without falling in his own esteem, and this must give him pain. But if he truly honour and reverence himself he cannot rest in this unfavourable opinion. If he had had a proper respect for himself from the beginning, such a conference could never have taken place; and now that it has taken place, his next step must be to rectify those errors and meannesses, that have deprived him of his own good opinion. A man of sensibility cannot rest under the degradation of finding himself so unworthy of the esteem of mankind and even his own, and much more of the approbation of his God. If he has any remains of ingenuousness, he will not be able to endure the idea and the conviction, that he has been imposing on the world and himself, and dissembling

in the face of Heaven. He will therefore be on his guard against affronting and disgracing his purer and more honourable self, in time to come. Instead of his former principles of action, he will continually ask himself,—from what motive, with what view am I about to engage in this business?—how will it appear to me after it is done? Shall I be ashamed to think of it, or will the recollection of it give me pride and pleasure, however it may appear to others? Let me take care that I do not prefer some paltry profit to my peace of mind; or the praise of the public to my own approbation. The advantages of vanity or gain are deceitful and fugacious; unfounded applause is fallacious and transitory. Let me make sure of one affectionate and respectable friend, whom I can always carry in my bosom; who will accompany me in solitude, and console me in sorrow; rejoice when I rejoice, and support me in all my trials; from whom I cannot part if I would, and whose good opinion, therefore, it should be my first object to gain.

If a man be incapable of coming to this resolution, he will be in danger of alienating this bosom friend, of shunning this kind of intercourse with him, and of going on in a course of public and personal deception. But if he can entertain esteem and respect for himself, he will grow fond of his own company; he will take pleasure in conversing with himself; he will never be less solitary than when alone. In these conversations he will have no secrets nor reserve, no deceit or imposition; and when engaged in business, he will be continually asking himself: how will this affair bear to be talked over in private?—am I actuated by any motive, or have I descended to any practices that I shall be ashamed to avow to myself; or that will make me unwilling to meet my internal adviser and monitor, the inward witness of my thoughts? How shall I be mortified and disgraced, if I find *him* disgusted at my conduct! What signifies all this display of vanity and falsehood abroad, if I meet with so bad a reception at home?

The tendency of every kind of vice is to separate us from this bosom friend, and to discourage this Self-converse; and the effect of giving over this Self-converse is, to run into vice, more or less according to our

natural bent, if it were only to avoid his secret whispers : for if our internal friend shall find us disengaged, he will intrude in spite of us ; and then, instead of that sweet, confidential intercourse, which we might have enjoyed, we shall have nothing but reproach and contempt on one side, and on the other frivolous apologies, gross attempts at deceit, supported by mean or impudent falsehoods.

If these interviews be interrupted for any considerable length of time, there is danger that the parties may have changed so much in the interim as to take no pleasure in each other's company : or if the conference be confined to general topics, there may not be a right understanding on particular points. The conversation may become loose, general, and ceremonious ; the parties may grow ignorant of each other's affairs, and the whole benefit of their intercourse be lost. For these reasons, it is necessary, that our Self-converse should not only treat of particulars, as I have already explained ; but also be frequently repeated.

We are commonly exhorted to perform this exercise of Self-examination, Self-inspection, or Self-converse, on certain stated occasions, such as times of sickness and calamity, and the celebration of the Communion : and these are, no doubt, very suitable seasons for more solemn conferences with ourselves. But if the parties never meet except upon such rare and distant occasions, it is to be feared, that their visits will grow formal, and that a confidential, unreserved intimacy, will hardly be formed in this way.

I would rather recommend that elegant precept of David:—"Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." Let every day receive a particular review, when its gaudy, garish phantoms, are excluded from the senses by the curtain of night ; and before our motives and our speculations have been buried in the oblivion of sleep, or our recollection of them confounded, and our sensibility blunted by the delusions of another day : while as yet we have time to correct our errors, not only to repent of what we have done and concluded ; but to alter the course which we have only begun.

Let the whole train of ideas, which have peopled the brain, and kept us in such hurry and agitation during



the day, be now recalled from the memorial cell. Let them pass before our Internal Monitor, who has been a silent spectator of the scene. Let us see with what countenance they present themselves, and how they are received? Behold how some imaginations, that before swelled with gaiety and pride, now appear downcast and dejected!—some that filled the mind with arrogance and presumption, now advance with shame and fear: others that inspired self-gratulation and complacency, appear covered with a cloud of confusion and guilt; while some that had been banished by their insolent and guilty competitors, are the only thoughts that bear a cheerful front, and are recognized with pleasure and satisfaction.

Fear not that this ideal review will intercept your repose. If executed in simple honesty and good faith, it will prove your most composing opiate. If your actions and your projects can bear this test, how sweet will be your slumbers, how soft your pillow! If any of the ideal train were likely to lead you astray, how happy is it for you to be delivered in time from their seductions!

The oftener you perform this exercise, the less occasion will you have to perform it, and the less pain will you feel in the performance: and in time it will grow into habitual watchfulness. You will learn to keep your hearts with diligence. Conscience will be your inseparable companion, and your champion in all your encounters with the world.

If we accustom ourselves to this nightly revision of our thoughts and actions, we cannot fail to reap the fruits of it. The pure and spiritual part of our constitution will assuredly obtain the superiority over our grosser affections: the spirit of God will dwell in us, and the censorial jurisdiction of conscience will be at an end. But if these interviews become rare, they will soon be discontinued, and the parties will contract a mutual distaste for each other's company.

In these nightly visitations, David admonishes us to "be still," The mind must be kept calm, dispassionate, and quiet. Our thoughts must not be clothed even in ideal words. We must not conceive the form of an excuse, apology, or justification; much less of prevarication or subterfuge. There must be no elaborate

statement of a case, no taking of exceptions, no special pleadings, no replications, rejoinders, or demurrers. Such juridical proceedings would scare away your nightly visitant.

Retire within thyself—thy thoughts call home :  
 Lock up thy senses : let no passion stir :  
 Wake all to reason ; let her reign alone—  
 Then, in thy soul's deep silence, and the depth  
 Of nature's silence, midnight, thus enquire.—  
 'Tis greatly wise to talk with our last hours,  
 And ask them what report they bore to heaven ?

Thus should we honour ourselves ; and when we honour ourselves thus, we honour the image of God in which we were made ; and the spirit of God that dwelleth in us ; and therefore God himself ; for we are the temple of God, in which his spirit presides, and his image is enshrined. If in this we proceed with sincerity, we shall discover and feel the superiority of the still, small voice of our own praise over the acclamations of the multitude ; and the poignancy of our own reproaches compared with the slander of the world ; but if we admit any duplicity into the process, we shall lose our own approbation without gaining the applause of men, and be overwhelmed at once with the clamours of an upbraiding conscience, and the aggravated calumnies of a censorious world.

ERASMUS.

---

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—The following original argument, on a passage that has, perhaps, more frequently than any other, been brought against the Unitarians, is, I think, very satisfactory, and perhaps worthy of a place in your periodical. I copy it from the *American Unitarian Monitor* of September last. Yours faithfully,

C. R. K.

Cork, Decr. 1831.

ARGUMENT FOR THE SIMPLE UNITY OF THE  
GODHEAD; DEDUCED FROM THE MORAL  
CHARACTER OF OUR LORD.

---

DEAR SIR,—You requested me, a short time since, to commit some observations to paper respecting the celebrated passage, “*I and my Father are one*”—and which seemed in your opinion, to afford an unanswerable argument in support of the simple and undivided unity of the Godhead. I believe the view is nearly as follows.

Suppose a religious association should employ a missionary for the express purpose of propagating some particular doctrine. When arrived among the people he is to instruct, he addresses them on the subject of his mission. But they are highly displeased. They demand what he intends by such strange and unreasonable doctrine. They even threaten him with violence for advancing views, as they say, derogatory to God. He is embarrassed and intimidated, and endeavors to prove that they have mistaken his meaning, and it was only owing to their precipitate inadvertence that they had fallen into so egregious an error. He then shows them wherein his observations admitted of the constructions they had overlooked. They are satisfied with the explanation, and he departs from among them. I ask, what the association would say to such an agent? Would they consider him as having been faithful? Would they not say, he had been very *unfaithful*, in not abiding by the doctrine he had been commissioned to teach, even though it *had* excited some degree of opposition; nay more, that he had only confirmed the people in the ignorance and error in which he found them? He had given them good reason to suppose he did not embrace the doctrine, from the imputation of which he had cleared his remarks, and consequently, had done the cause material harm. Such a missionary would *Jesus Christ* have been, as far as I can perceive, if the Trinitarian doctrine be true.

The case is this. Jesus after one of his discourses, was accused by his Jewish auditory of making himself equal with God, which they pronounced a blasphemous crime. We have the account in the 10th chapter of

John. "*Jesus said, I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, many good works have I shewed you from my Father ; for which of these works do you stone me ? The Jews answered him saying, for a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because, that thou being a man, makest thyself God.*"

Now, on supposition that Christ *was* equal with the Father, and that this doctrine formed an *essential* part of his commission, we have the case of the missionary just mentioned who was violently assaulted by his hearers for telling them the truth. I can see no possible difference. Our Saviour observed to his auditors what they interpreted as importing his equality with God. It did and does so import, say the advocates for the Trinity. What now was the path of duty for the Saviour to pursue? Will his moral character admit of his taking back a fundamental truth, of seeming to disclaim it on any occasion? He might have exercised prudence as to selecting the most favourable opportunity for its promulgation. But having asserted it, or employed any language which was so interpreted, could he consistently with his purity and his love for the souls of men, appear to explain it away? What then was Jesus' answer to the accusation of having made himself equal with God? "*And Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law I said ye were Gods? If he called them Gods unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I am the son of God?*" As much as to observe, "you ought to know from your own scriptures that the epithet God, is applicable to all persons to whom his word is communicated as his ambassadors and representatives on earth. Had I therefore, who am such a messenger sanctified and sent of God into the world, announced myself to you under the title God, it would not have sustained the allegation of blasphemy. It would have proved no more than that I claim to be the bearer of his word. But the truth is, even this title I did not assume. I spoke of God as my Father, making myself his Son; and will you now charge me with blasphemy for declaring myself the Son of God when I might have taken upon myself the

very name of \* Jehovah without any qualification, and it would have been only what all his ambassadors are authorised to do according to the scriptures?

From this answer it appears, that our Saviour justified his remarks that he and his Father were one, upon the ground that God had sanctified and sent him into the world as his ambassador. The reasoning was this. The ambassador is to all intents and purposes the same to those to whom he is sent as the Sovereign or Government in whose behalf he appears. They are in this respect *one*. This principle, says the Saviour, is recognised in your Scriptures, where Moses and others are called Gods, because to them the word of God came. How unjust, therefore, to pronounce me guilty of blasphemy, for calling myself one with God,—or rather, *one with my Father*, language of itself sufficiently avoiding the charge of a strict equality between us, as it places me only in a filial relation, by the very face of the expression “my Father.” The enemies of our Saviour were silenced. They do not object to his explanation; and it is remarkable, that though they suborned witnesses to impeach him of blasphemy at his trial, they did not produce *this* accusation, though it would better have answered their purpose than any other, could it have been sustained. What must have been the effect of this answer upon the auditors? Could it have been any other than it was? Could they have dreamt he intended to inculcate his own personal equality with God? Could they have believed that if he was an honest and faithful teacher, he would evade an alleged construction of his words, provided the construction were true, and embraced an essential doctrine? Many of them perhaps were never to enjoy another opportunity of hearing him, at least upon this doctrine. Could they conceive that so far from embracing it to communicate right views upon the subject, he should manage it in such a manner as unavoidably to mislead them? Sup-



\* I have been favoured with a note by a friend. “There is an error here; it should be “God” instead of “Jehovah.” The former word, God, or in Hebrew *Elohim*, is the name by which Moses, Judges, Masters, Rulers, or Ghosts, are designated; as in Ex. vii. 1. Ex. xxi. 6. Ex. xxii. 8, 9, 28, and I. Sam. xxviii. 13. JEHOVAH is the incommunicable and incommunicated name of the MOST HIGH.”



pose these same auditors should afterwards be told of any expressions of his which might seem to import that he was equal with the Father: would they not be bound in candour to reply, "True, the expressions are strong; and we were once as much surprised as yourselves. He appeared to us to affirm his equality with the infinite Deity, in the most decided terms. We charged him with blasphemy. But he argued the subject with us very calmly, and shewed that language as strong, and even stronger if possible, than his own, is applied in the scriptures to those who had only received, like himself, a commission of God, to proclaim the word of God to mankind. Though ready to have stoned him, therefore, we suffered him to depart in peace."

I feel this single argument decisive to show that Jesus did not claim any personal equality with God. *Had* he claimed it, he never would have explained it away. He would have said; "You pronounce me a blasphemer, for calling myself equal with God. I shall not retract the assertion of which you accuse me. You suppose I claimed a *strict, real* equality. I shall not mislead you, as to an important and fundamental doctrine, by casting round for some other interpretation. The doctrine is not only true, but an *essential* truth. You may stone me to death for telling you the truth. Sooner or later, I expect to fall a victim of your malignity. But while I remain with you, I will not disclaim any part of my religion, though it should awaken your animosity. I *might* have vindicated the language to which you object by scriptural precedent, on the ground that I am the ambassador of God, by whom the word of God has come to you. But I will not explain away my Divine equality in one of its essential meanings, by placing it exclusively upon this *inferior* basis. I should be your enemy by so doing, for I should have you to infer that this was the *only* explanation."

I am totally unable to conceive how the holy and immaculate Jesus should have adopted any other proceeding, if he had been equal with God. It is common to argue the simple and indivisible unity of Jehovah from passages of scripture which are wholly of a *critical* and *biblical* character. But here, as appears to me, is a *moral* proof, a proof resting on the *moral* purity of our Lord. It is a case in which the subject of his in-

finite Godhead was placed before him distinctly. His attention was arrested to this very point. We have it under adjudication before him in the most unequivocal form. It is the position at issue between him and his accusers. "You have made yourself equal with God. You are a blasphemer." With what intense interest must we await the reply! We know he will not be deterred. We feel he will suffer no personal fears to make him unfaithful to an essential truth. He returns his answer to the accusation of calling himself equal with God, and his explanation is one which places his meaning solely and exclusively upon the ground of his being a messenger of God. To raise a different construction from a few disputed passages, I cannot but think, leaves a serious question to be settled with the simplicity and sincerity of our Saviour's character; though I am persuaded no Trinitarian is more disposed than I can be, to cast any imputation upon these virtues of our Lord.

---

## UNCONSCIENTIOUS CONFORMITY.

### MARRIAGE.

---

THE nature and consequences of the profanation of one of the rites of our holy religion, that of the Lord's Supper, are so explicitly declared in the impressive and startling words of the Gospel, and have been so ably pointed out by divines and moralists, as to render it unnecessary to dedicate a paper to their lengthened consideration, in a periodical circulated among the class of readers who peruse the Bible Christian. The effects of the prostitution of that Sacrament, whether by unconscientious conformity or otherwise, must be apparent to all who direct their mind to the consideration of the subject. But where a Unitarian is a party in another service of religion, that of Marriage, celebrated according to the form used by the Church of England, though conscience is glaringly violated, and religion profaned, the nature of the act and its consequences, are not so apparent. They shall form the subject of the following observations.

The form used by the Church of England in the solemnization of Matrimony, has from some persons received unlimited praise, as a composition beautiful in its language, and powerful in its effects. From that praise the writer does not stop to detract, though he admits the parts not selected from Scripture, in his opinion, owe much of the admiration bestowed upon them, either to early prepossession, or a blind and weak subservience to fashion. The defects, however, or the beauties of the ceremony, are not attributable to the founders of the Church of England. Like the too much lauded Litany, and most of the other parts of the service of the Church of England, it has been borrowed from the Church of Rome, and is, with little variation, that which was used by the Roman Catholic Church before the Reformation. No person will deny the suitability of the passages selected from Scripture : but the advantage of these is not confined to any Church ; for they, or some others equally appropriate, are used as part of the Marriage service, by the generality of the Dissenting clergy in Ireland.

With this or any other part of the ritual of the Church of England, so far as it interests or affects its own members, the writer does not mean, nor does he wish to interfere. He desires not to lessen their admiration of the forms of their religion ; in their eyes he would not willingly depreciate them. He merely desires to excite Christians of other persuasions to examine these forms before they admit their pretensions to the qualities and perfections that may be attributed to them ; and to form for themselves a just estimate of their merits, lest immoderate admiration of a human composition, an inclination to follow the dictates of fashion, or any other worldly motive, should make them blind to the nature and tendency of their acts, and lead them into the commission of a crime awfully reprehensible.

The doctrine of the Trinity is held by the Church of England to be an essential article of Christian faith, and in the form for the solemnization of Matrimony, that doctrine is set forth and used in a manner the most objectionable and repugnant to the opinions and faith of a Unitarian. I shall, at present, only direct attention to two parts of the service wherein this occurs :—first, the

blessing, which commences with, "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you." And, secondly, that part where the couple to be married, whilst kneeling before the Lord's table, are made to offer up a prayer *directly* to Christ.

To a Trinitarian, neither of these present any ground of objection. He believes, as one part of the doctrine of the Trinity, that God and Christ are equal in power and glory. He believes that Christ is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God. He, therefore, can receive the blessing and offer up this prayer conscientiously and without scruple. Is this the case with the Unitarian? No, it is the very reverse. He believes in the simple unity of God. He views his Saviour according to his own blessed declarations of himself. For him his soul burns, and his heart swells with the warmest, the purest, and the tenderest feelings of irrepressible and enthusiastic admiration—the most hallowed and devoted gratitude and love. But he understands Christ to declare distinctly of himself, that he is not God. He believes that the Father and the Son are *one* in purpose, but that they are distinct in person; and that the Son, be his power and his glory ever so great, has *received* them from HIM, who is his "Father and our Father, his God and our God." To God alone does the Unitarian offer up his prayers. He can and does pray to God through his glorified Saviour; but to pray *directly* to him, or to assert or admit that he is God, is contrary to his faith, and, in his view, opposed by the whole tenor of the Gospel.

How, then, can a Unitarian justify himself if he voluntarily submit to, and participate in this rite? Does he not, in doing so, violate the dictates of his conscience? Does he not disobey that first commandment of his Creator,—“Thou shalt have none other Gods but me?” In the most solemn manner, and in the invoked presence of God, he is about to form the dearest and holiest tie of earth; under what circumstances does he do so?—under what unholy auspices does he register his vows to be faithful to his wife, and to the duties of his new situation? At the moment he utters those vows, is he not *faithless* to his duties as a Christian?—is he not a violater of his conscience, and a rebel and traitor to the Being in whose holy presence he stands, and whose name is on his sinful and irreverent lips?

Try him by his own faith and principles, and mark the situation in which he places himself. He leaves the simple and effective service of his own Church—he deserts the religious professions of his previous life—he declares his acquiescence in a creed which he disbelieves, and offers up a prayer, and joins in worship which his reason disavows and his soul condemns. He for ever sinks and degrades himself in his own estimation, and in that of her who has vowed to *honor* him;—he is a wretch, guilty and self-condemned—an APOSTATE before the world—a HYPOCRITE before his God. Is it necessary to pursue the subject further—to point out his crime—to paint his wretched degradation?—a tie so formed, a union so cemented, can neither be blessed nor happy. Marriage can only be an honourable, a happy, or a blessed state, when it is entered into with proper motives and feelings, and cemented by the vows of hearts faithful to God and to man. The vows of all others are written in water. Their highest resolves and their best intentions will fly when assailed by temptation, like the light sand of the desert before the sweep of the tempest. To believe in their promises is folly; to trust our happiness to them is madness.

Enough has been already said. But it may not be improper to make a few observations upon one of the most dangerous and seductive temptations, to the commission of the crimes of which this paper treats. There is a temptation, that has its origin in the best feelings of the human heart, and cannot, without a painful struggle, be resisted by those whose affections are too deeply engaged; it arises from a desire to gratify the wishes of the person who is the object of our earthly love. The true Christian will nevertheless resist the temptation; he will withstand the solicitations of sin. He will do so from obedience to the law of God. He will feel that transgressions of that law, though of a character in themselves the most venial, are foundations on which may be erected a frightful fabric of iniquity.

“We are not worst at first—the course of evil  
Begins so slowly, and from such slight source,  
An infant’s hand might stem its breach with clay;  
But let the stream get deeper, and philosophy—  
Ay, and religion too,—shall strive in vain  
To turn the headlong torrent.”



But the unconscientious participation in the religious ceremony herein noticed is of no venial kind; it is a crime of the deepest and blackest die. He who wilfully and deliberately commits it, can be no novice in sin—his soul must be already steeped in the depths of guilt and crime. And what must be his fate? He will become loathsome to himself and despised by man; even she who has vowed to honour, cannot as she would; and must feel that to associate with him is wrong—to be united to him, improper. Such, even in this world, are the merited rewards of Apostacy. It rests not with man to speak its punishment hereafter.

L. L—D.

---

DR. COOKE AND THE NEW SYSTEM OF  
EDUCATION.

---

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—Few of your readers, I think, are ignorant of the change contemplated in the manner of forwarding the Government Grant for the Education of the Irish poor. Acquainted as I was with the system adopted by the “Kildare-street Society,” to which the Grant was originally entrusted, I rejoiced in the prospect of a Reformation, and hailed as a bright omen of the regeneration of our country, the new plan submitted by the Irish secretary to the Duke of Leinster. Well, however, as I thought of it, and sanguine as I felt respecting its beneficial results, I must confess, I was disposed to doubt that all was not right, when I heard of a triumphant exposure of the new system, in “the Orthodox Presbyterian.” I immediately read the article with all attention, but was considerably disappointed, when I found nothing therein that bore the slightest shade of solid argument, but a continuous rhyme about Protestantism in danger. That there might, after all, be something in the new plan which had escaped the observation of this Religious periodical, I deemed possible when I understood that a “*pro re nata*” meeting of the General Synod of Ulster was called, expressly for the purpose of taking into consideration the awful catastrophe which was about to ensue, in the event of the plan being adopted. This also I understand, though

not "a dumb," was yet but "a poor show." That the good people of Belfast might have an opportunity of seeing exposed in its full light the horrid principle of this Reforming age, a notice was published, that on Sunday, 15th inst., a sermon would be preached on the subject, in May-street Church, by the Rev. Dr. Cooke. On that occasion, I thought that the Dr. after minute investigation, and from the suggestions of his *talented* brethren of our Northern Synod of *genuine* Presbyterians, would be enabled to settle my doubts on the subject—and so indeed he did, for I do sincerely declare, that in the whole course of my experience, I never heard any thing (and I have heard much nonsense) at all to be compared, in point of *trickery* and *declamation*, with the production of the Dr. on that occasion. As I am afraid he will not venture to publish anew (as I hear he has been requested) what he has so often spouted, I wish, through you, to afford an opportunity to those who were not present, of judging of the ebullitions of the evening.

After entering, at great length, into the different points in Politics, with which Religion had and had not concern, he proceeded to denounce, in no measured terms, the proposed plan of Education, as, a "Trick of the Devil," a system composed of "Neology (an old favourite) Unitarianism, Radicalism, and Popery:—That "the Devil is now only completing in Dublin what he commenced in the wilderness:—"That the Government was about to "murder the Bible!" This formed the substance of a lengthened course of violent declamation, during which he did not fail to work upon the passions of his hearers, by pouring forth most awful denunciations against such as would exclude the Bible, and by reminding them of the deeds of their Protestant forefathers. This indeed was well. It served his purpose admirably with those who never questioned the correctness of the position that "Government wished to murder the Bible," but in the minds of such as understood the true nature and state of the case, his falsehoods only excited disgust. Dr. Cooke—a Christian Minister!—after reading from Mr. Stanley's letter that "one or two days in the week would be set apart for giving separately, such *Religious* education to the children, as may be approved of by the clergy of their respective persuasions,"—Yes, after reading this, a minister

of the Gospel had the hardihood to declare publicly before a Belfast audience, that "the Government wanted to murder the Bible!" But there are some men by whom any thing can be said, and there are others who can submit to any thing, however contrary to reason; so it was with Dr. Cooke and many of his hearers, who "with greedy ear devoured up his discourse." To join with a Roman Catholic in promoting the moral and literary education of the poor of our land, Dr. Cooke considers a crime of the deepest die—an act, rather than be guilty of which, he openly declared he would willingly submit to have his right hand struck off. How benevolent—How martyrdom-like—How praiseworthy! That rather than assist in the cultivation of the human mind, because that of a Roman Catholic,—that rather than co-operate in promoting the peace, the happiness, and the welfare of the rising generation, because it might be composed of Roman Catholics, a preacher of the Gospel, a *Doctor* of Divinity would submit his body to torture!—That rather than sanction a system which would afford to all of every persuasion, Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, an opportunity of having their children brought up according to those religious principles which they considered most accordant with the word of God, he would prefer to have "the fires of Smithfield re-kindled, and to die in the flames." Glorious man!—Fine language to awaken Religious prejudice, and make an impression on the minds of the multitude. But he knew right well, that he was living in the nineteenth century, and that "Civil and Religious Liberty" had removed the axe, and extinguished for ever the fires of Intolerant Bigotry, and that, therefore, he would be spared a little longer "to try the minutes of the Synod, and toss over the pages of his memory," and perhaps find out what had escaped his notice when blind-folded by too eager a desire of branding with falsehood a deputation of liberal christians. For the same reason also, are those, who differ from him in Religious sentiments, still in the land of hope and reformation. Dr. Cooke, will be a Protestant—a *true* Protestant in his education of the poor, and take "the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible." Now, I would ask him in sincerity, would he introduce the Bible, at the very first outset, to a child, who previous-

ly did not know a letter of its alphabet ; or even granting he did, would he teach “nothing *but* the Bible?”—no Writing—no Arithmetic—nothing *but* the *Bible* ! Does he not believe in his soul, that two days of the week would be sufficient for the scholar to be taught the scriptures, by a teacher whom he would wish, and his parent or guardian approve ? Even if he think it would *not* be sufficient, let him recollect (but this to him is useless, as he knows it right well)—let the public recollect, that if the allotted portion be considered *insufficient*, it is allowed to add to this specified time, as much as may be deemed necessary or convenient before or after the regular business of the other days of the week. It is expressly declared, that “they (the Government) will also permit and *encourage* the clergy, to give *religious* instructions to the children of their respective persuasions, either before or after the ordinary school hours, on the other days of the week.” If this method be to “murder the Bible,” then is Dr. Cooke right in his assertion ; if the contrary, then let the finger of a discerning public write on his brow the odious words *Misrepresentation* and *Calumny*. With each repetition of the oft repeated “nothing but the Bible” did a tremour seize upon my frame, when I considered, that before me stood a man, whose persecutions had expelled from the Synod of Ulster, men of sterling worth, because they would keep their consciences immaculate, and take as *their creed*, “*nothing but the Bible* :” When I thought that I stood in the presence of a human being, who could, without compunction, use language to carry his point when endeavoring to conquer *one* class of his fellow-men—his Roman Catholic brethren, to which he would not pay the slightest degree of attention when persecuting *another*—the Remonstrants against the resolutions of the Synod of Ulster—then indeed I thought his work of *inconsistency* was complete, and that “nature should have shed a tear.” Did Mr. Cooke, in his overtures of the General Synod of Ulster in 1828, insist, as he did on 15th January 1832, upon “the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible,” to be signed as the bond of union by the members of Synod ? No, the farthest from it possible. It was then the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the whole *Westminster Confession of Faith*, and nothing but the *Westminster*

*Confession of Faith.* For Remonstrating against signing the absurd dogmas which are contained therein, and for refusing to submit to human Overtures attempted to be forced upon them, many conscientious ministers and their families were cast upon the mercy of more liberal and tender hearts than his, for subsistence. But the *Mr. Cooke* then, is become the *Dr. Cooke* now, and the weapon which he saw was wielded with so much force against him and his fraternity, by Protestant Presbyterians, he judges will be of inestimable advantage to him in his present and future endeavours to prevent his Roman Catholic brethren, from obtaining from a liberal Government, a Literary, a Moral, and a Religious education. Again, I put it to the world, was his language on Sunday the 15th inst., consistent with his declaration made on a late occasion, at no great distance from the place where he then stood ; on which, in order to force upon honest Presbyterians, a man whose doctrines they disbelieved, and were willing to prove were contrary to the Bible, he flatly asserted that "it was not sufficient to prove a doctrine to be contrary to the *Scriptures*, it must also be proved to be contrary to the *Westminster Confession of Faith*?" This I think was a new version of his boasted Protestant principles, "the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible." He thought it would then serve his purpose, and all was well. That any true Protestant could say so is impossible ; that *Dr. Cooke* did is certain. If the Bible and "Westminster Confession of Faith" contain the same doctrines, it would not, I think, require a profound mathematician to prove, that what is contrary to the one, must of necessity be contrary to the other. If they contain opposite doctrines, then does the *Dr.* assert that we should prefer the "*Westminster Confession of Faith*." Perhaps, however, he believes with one of his worthy satellites, that "the Bible is a creed as far as it goes." If so, then it does not contain all knowledge necessary for salvation, but we are to refer for such important information to this popular "Confession" of the day, and must feel eternal gratitude to those celebrated divines of old, who, preferring the salvation of posterity to their own, disregarded the awful denunciation against all such as would either "*add to,*" or "*take away from*" the word of God.



After much ranting against what he termed "the Bill," the Rev. preacher suggested a question which he thought might very naturally be put to him, "if he objected to the present plan what other would he propose?" This did not require a moment's consideration. "He would propose a christian plan—the Bible," and if this be not granted "he would next propose that government would let them alone." That the former plan has not been denied him, I have already shown, that the latter is uncalled for is evident. The people of Ireland have not been deprived of their Bible; their religious, moral, and literary education, has, by government, never been interfered with. A grant has been given for the education of the poor: if they do not wish to embrace the advantages which it affords, they are not, *they never have been compelled*.

To conclude the farce, he read, at full length, the different resolutions passed, with only one dissenting voice, at the late meeting of the General Synod of Ulster. This individual (Mr. Carlile of Dublin) is one of the "Board" appointed by government to superintend the new system of Education; but we are told by the Dr. that he will resign his situation, as he can not hold it conscientiously. Now Mr. Carlile either can hold his situation conscientiously, or he can not; if he can not, why does he not *immediately* resign; if he can, why does Dr. Cooke boast that he can not.

Let it not be supposed, that my object in these observations, is to laud the new system, or to approve of every thing that may hereafter be done by the "Board." No, Sir, my *sole object* is to give to your readers some of the "sayings" in May-street Church, and afford them another opportunity of marking the *Misrepresentation* and *Inconsistency* of the Political declaimer who ministers in "holy things" within its walls.

A FRIEND TO TRUTH AND CONSISTENCY.

16th January, 1832.

P. S.—Since writing the above, I perceive that Mr. Carlile has given a flat contradiction to Dr. Cook's assertion that he was about to resign. Let the world, now judge of the character of that man, who dared to utter publicly from the pulpit what he knew in his heart to be contrary to fact.

## PROGRESS OF THE PERSONIFICATION OF THE LOGOS, AND ITS IDENTIFICATION WITH OUR SAVIOUR.

---

A DISTINGUISHED writer has said, that to trace an error to its source is the easiest way to refute it. Impressed with the truth of this statement, it may be useful as well as interesting, to mark the steps by which the *Logos* came at last to be personified and applied to our blessed Saviour. We are all aware that the grand obstacle to the reception of Christianity by the Gentile world, both in the time of the Apostles and of their immediate successors, was the doctrine of a *crucified* Saviour. St. Paul informs us it was "to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness;" and traces may be easily discerned in the earliest Fathers of the prevalence and force of this objection in their day. The successors of the Apostles very naturally endeavoured to obviate this objection, by augmenting, as much as possible, the dignity of the person of Christ; an endeavour which was rendered comparatively easy of accomplishment, by the peculiar philosophical opinions which then flourished in that part of the world, which was the more immediate scene of their exertions.

It was the received opinion in the East, that the lesser intelligences, such as angels and demons, had *emanated* from the Divine mind, and that other intelligent beings of still inferior dignity, such as man, had in turns *emanated* from them. In order to exalt the idea of Jesus Christ, these Christians asserted, that his soul was a principal emanation directly from the mind of God. But although these religious philosophers kept steadily in view their great object, of exalting the Saviour in the eyes of the heathen; of assimilating, in some degree, the idea of his origin to the preconceived opinions of the people whom they were endeavouring to evangelize, and thus of opening a readier way for the introduction of our holy Religion; yet, as might be expected among mere theorists, great diversities of opinion still prevailed. Some asserted that the world was not made by God, but by angels, and that Jesus was born a mere man, but at his baptism the spirit of God descended upon him; while others maintained that Christ was not born a man,

but took the appearance of a man at once, and showed himself full grown and of perfect proportions at Galilee.

Plato considered the Divine mind as having within itself certain *ideas* or *archetypes* of whatever was at any time to exist without; that the subject of these, or that from which all external things and beings originated, was that intelligent principle which he called the *nous*, and which Philo afterwards designated the *Logos*. To this principle, or as he also held, this emanation from the Divine mind, Plato gave the appellation of *a second God*, saying, "the Lord and maker of the universe, whom we justly call God, made a second God, visible and sensible." Thus it was that the *Logos* or *ratio*, originally reckoned an attribute of the Divine mind, came to be considered and exhibited, first by the Grecian Philosophers, and then by the Christians of that day, (for the purposes before mentioned) as an intelligent substantial being, distinct, though emanating from God. The early Christians having naturalized this pagan idea of the *Logos*, began at once to apply it to Christ; though the Unitarians protested against this new and unauthorized acceptance of the term. "But thou wilt tell me something strange"—says Hippolytus, as quoted by Beausobre, in his *Histoire de Manicheisme*—"but thou wilt tell me something *strange* in saying that *Logos* is the Son." Austin admits that he held the doctrine of the simple humanity of Christ in common with the Ebionites and Nazarenes (the Jewish Christians of his day,) until he became acquainted with the writings of Plato, of which a Latin version was then extant; in which, he adds, that he learned the doctrine of the *Logos*. Of nearly the same opinions with the Ebionites were the *Alogi*, so denominated by Epiphanius from their rejection of the Platonic hypothesis, as held by him and his *orthodox* brethren.

We do not find deity ascribed to Jesus Christ before the time of Justin Martyr, who (as has been clearly shown by Lindsay, in his "Second Address to the students of Oxford and Cambridge,") considered himself as the *first* who advanced the dogma of Christ being the *Logos*. Even the same Justin Martyr, in his *Apology*, seems in part to abandon his new doctrine, by intimating that "if, in an extraordinary manner, Christ be the *Logos* of God, this is *common with those who call*

*Mercury the Logos* that declares the will of God." Origen further says, that "by the second God we mean only a virtue or a reason (Logos,) and that this reason is particularly attached to the soul of Christ." *Contra Celsum*, lib. v, p. 259. Having thus converted a simple attribute of the Deity into a person, these Pagan Christians settled also the time of the emanation of the Logos from God to be at the creation, when he said "Let there be light." "This" says Tertullian, "was the perfect nativity of the Word when it proceeded from God." The same mode of explaining the origin of the *Logos* continued for a long time to prevail among the Fathers, for we find exactly the same account in Lactantius who was tutor in the family of Constantine.

All the writers of this period speak of Christ or the Logos, as not having always had a *personal* existence distinct from the Father. This Clemens Alexandrinus calls the Father alone without beginning, and declares the Son to be the *beginning* and first fruits of *all things*; almost adopting the words of St. Paul in the v. ch. of the Epistle to the Colossians, that Christ is "the first-born of every creature." Tertullian openly asserts (*Ad Hermogenem* c. iii.) that "God was not always a Father, since he could not be a Father before he had a Son, and there was a time *when the Son was not*." At the time of the Council of Nice, Sanctantius says, "God before he commenced the creation of the world, produced a holy and incorruptible spirit which he might call his Son." *Inst.* lib. iv. p. 364. These Fathers also held that it depended on the good pleasure of the Supreme Being whether he would give existence to Jesus Christ or not. Justin Martyr says, that Christ is "subservient to his Father's will, and was *begotten at his Father's pleasure*;" Novatius, that from God, "*when he himself pleased*, the Word was born;" Eusebius, that "God, *at his pleasure*, became the Father of the Son;" and the Council of Sirmium declares that "if any say that the Son was not begotten *at the will of the Father*, let him be anathema."

Thus have I endeavoured to show the progress of the personification of the *Logos* and consequent deification of Christ. It was certainly very natural in the disciples of Jesus, harassed as they were by the refusal of the heathen to accept for their Lord one who had

died as a malefactor, to make him *God of God*; for as yet they had not ventured to assert his equality with the Father. Where will modern Trinitarians discover in these quotations the absurdities of the Son being equal to the Father, eternal and having an underived existence? We find in them no such unreasonable dogma, no such unintelligible verbiage, as “begotten from everlasting of the Father;” these early Christians speak of Christ as “the beginning of all things,” of a time “when the Son was not,” of God producing him “before the creation of the world.” We discover also, in the conclusion of the last paragraph, that it was universally held, even by the apotheosists of Christ, by Justin Martyr—the father of Orthodoxy by Novatius, by Eusebius, that it depended entirely on the will of God whether he would produce our Saviour or not; and this decision is confirmed by the Council of Sirmium, and sealed with an Orthodox anathema: so much for equality and underived existence! It is indeed gratifying to find, in all our researches, that new light is cast on the rational and Scriptural doctrine of the perfect unity of God; and every Bible Christian must rejoice to see, that “the grand and indeed only character of truth, is its capability of enduring the test of universal experience, and coming unchanged out of every possible form of fair discussion.

ALUMNUS,

---

### LIBERALITY.

---

THE following thoughts were suggested by an article which appeared in the *Orthodox Presbyterian* for December. In that delectable periodical, so eminently calculated for healing all those petty animosities which have, of late years, crept in upon Presbyterianism, we remarked with astonishment, that no less than six pages of its valuable paper, have been devoted to the subject of “*Charity*,” which is clearly shown not to consist in “*Indifference*.” This, we consider to have been a complete work of supererogation, as we are perfectly certain that there are not *very* many individuals belonging to



the Synod of Ulster, who would ever have fallen into such a woful mistake. The entire of the proceedings of that remarkably charitable Body, would have convinced the most casual observer, that they never entertained such an opinion for a single moment, as the writer of the above article would seem to be afraid of. Truly indeed, have they shown that their *Charity* is not *Indifference*; and truly have the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster experienced that it is a fact. The Remonstrants, however, are now happily placed beyond their reach, in regard of some slight matters, in which the "*Orthodox*" Synod had evinced a most *charitable* desire, (not of benefiting them, for this they do not expect, at least *directly*,) of performing most equitably all agreements relative to a peaceful separation. Not to stop longer on this subject, however, we shrewdly guess that this remarkable, and truly useful piece of information will be read throughout Ulster, with very great profit, as it is a subject on which the *generality* of Presbyterians have been most lamentably mistaken.

The word *Liberality* has been most shamefully prostituted in the present day; so much so, that its true meaning would appear to have been almost entirely lost. This is evident from the manner in which the term "*Liberal*" is almost universally received, and understood. An individual who has the honour of coming under this designation, is generally considered as being a well-intentioned, weak-minded, good sort of a person, who would be very sorry to censure any individual for his opinions, political, or religious; who would even go so far as to agree in many points with every one, and who would not have the slightest idea of calling in question any person's creed, however absurd it may be. An individual who would wish to come under this appellation, is also so condescending as willingly to go to every place of worship, with every friend who might happen to ask him, praises the preacher and the discourse, and is always glad to hear every side of a question advocated, as he considers it to be of *little consequence*, since it is impossible for all men to agree, what a person's belief on these subjects may be. Such a cringing, time-serving, milk-and-water kind of a person is to be most heartily pitied and despised. They wrong him most foully who term such a person *liberal*;

he is not a liberal in the true sense of the term, he is either a fool, a hypocrite, or an enemy to all religion. What! are we thus tamely to yield up our birthright, as intelligent and accountable beings, the noble privilege of thinking for ourselves, into the hands of every *friend*, who might perhaps tell us, while expressing an interest in our everlasting welfare, that if we do not renounce such and such opinions, and adopt others, "*we shall never see Heaven to our comfort?*" Are we thus to be guided in matters of *eternal* moment, by the conduct and conversation of those with whom chance may happen to associate us? Are we to deliver into the hands of others, and tamely yield up, (for the sake of promoting peace, of healing the bitterness of party feuds, and silencing the bickerings and animosities of party spirit,) opinions, in the truth of which mature deliberation has confirmed us? The man who acts such a part, is performing an act of injustice towards *himself*, his *religion*, and his *God*. He virtually owns that he has got no respect for himself, or his own character,—he shows that he considers his religious opinions to be of so little value, as not to have the slightest effect upon his moral conduct, and from thence upon his hopes of a hereafter; and he farther shows, that he is not sensible that the powers which were implanted in him, are intended for any higher purpose than obtaining the common necessities of life. Into these deplorable circumstances does this miscalled *liberality* and cringing servility reduce beings formed to far nobler pursuits, and fitted for glory, honor, and immortality.

Having come, after due deliberation, to a conviction of the truth or falsity of certain opinions, it is our bounden duty to evince, by our conduct and conversation, that we are really in earnest in what we profess; and that we are fully sensible of the high importance to be attached to the obtaining clear, definite, and, as far as possible, correct ideas on subjects connected with our everlasting welfare. In addition to all this, a man will be honored and respected, even by those who differ from him, for the bold and manly avowal of sentiments, be they ever so repugnant, if they were formed from conscientious motives, and not for the mere purpose of conciliating the favour and applause of the world.

The approval of the wise and good—the approval of our own consciences, is surely of more value than the unmeaning exclamations of an ignorant and deluded multitude.

Indifference and apathy are too often the effects of obtaining more liberal, more enlightened, and, as we consider, more enlarged views on Scriptural points, controverted in the present day. When we are no longer shackled and bound to the earth by creeds and confessions of human invention—when we have shaken off, in great measure, the mists and darknesses which we consider to have enveloped for ages the Christian world, and freed ourselves from the domination of priestly intolerance, we are frequently led to imagine, that as we no longer believe any particular place to be polluted by the presence of those of different opinions, and as we cheerfully can look upon all men as our brethren, journeying like ourselves through life, in expectation of a better and more exalted state of being, that we may mingle with them in the worship of our God; and allow that freedom of conscience to others which we claim for ourselves. With such feelings, we hope and trust our conduct shall ever be marked; with such dispositions do we wish ever to be found, in humble imitation of *him* whom it is our glory and pride to term our *master*.

But while we thus strive to walk after so pure an example, still we find that our opponents, or those who would wish to be considered as being our opponents, are by no means willing to extend similar kind feelings towards us. Our society is generally shunned by them, we are looked upon as outcasts, who, trusting to our own fallible judgments, have wrested Scripture to suit our own peculiar views,—have denied our Redeemer—have set up the light of reason in opposition to that of Revelation. We have been called *Arians*, *Socinians*, *Heretics*, and *Infidels*. Am I in error? Am I bringing forward one charge which has not been frequently advanced? If I am doing so, I am sorry for it, for I wish not to rouse one angry feeling. If these statements, however, be true, can our so called *liberality* be of service to our cause?—we will find it, in almost every instance, to be the direct contrary, since it is alleged

that we thus manifest our opinions to be of so little consequence as to be unworthy of being promulgated, not to speak of being steadfastly retained.

Let us not, then, be frightened by this word *Liberality*. Our Orthodox brethren have shown themselves very little disposed to act on the conciliatory terms which we wish to hold forth to them, and though their conduct should be no example to us, yet I maintain, that if many Unitarians of the present day were to act with a little more *firmness*, without at the same time, laying aside that *charity* which is greater than faith and hope, they would most materially benefit that cause which they consider to be the cause of truth, and not trench, in the slightest degree, upon *genuine liberality*. We have considered and “judged” for ourselves, fearlessly, candidly, and with hearts yearning after truth—we are now “fully persuaded in our own minds” of the justness of our conclusions, and of their agreement with the entire tenor of Scripture; let us then “stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free,” and manifest to the world our deep sense of the all-important nature of these results—of their tendency to make mankind wiser and better, and of our earnest desire that all should participate in them. Look at the example of the Apostle Paul. In his conduct we never find any of that over-refined delicacy for the feelings of others, but the fearless avowal, and unremitting exertion to extend, every sentiment which he considered of importance for the sincere followers of his Divine Master to be acquainted with. In a word, I would have you, when you have proved all things, to “*hold fast* to that which is good;”—let there be *then* no wavering nor hesitation.

If these observations be thought worthy of insertion, I may, perhaps, in a future number, continue the train of thought, particularly noticing the effects of controversy.

M.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—I am sorry to find, that to the various subjects of dissention, which have long agitated this country, another has been lately added, respecting a plan of National Religious Education. My object in writing these few lines is to moderate this ferment.

So far as I have had an opportunity of being acquainted with the principles and regulations of the Society in Kildare Place, of inspecting their Library or Book Depository, and observing the conduct of their Model and Country Schools, it has received my unqualified approbation. It has also enjoyed the favour and support of Government for many years; and I see no cause to suspect, that it has entirely forfeited them. I hope, therefore, that under its protection, aided by the contributions of well-disposed persons, it may long retain a great share of its former influence; and supply what may be wanting in the Committee of Education, towards completing the great purpose which they have both in view. It might, perhaps, have accomplished their joint object in a great measure of itself, had it not been for the invincible opposition of the Romish Clergy to the use of the Bible in their Schools. This has, at last obliged Government to resort to the plan recently adopted.

It is of primary importance in every state, that, a spirit of amity should prevail; and the surest means of gaining this point is, that people of different religious persuasions and political prejudices should grow up from the earliest years in mutual habits of intimacy and friendship. In no country is the want of this general sympathy so much to be regretted, as in Ireland, notwithstanding the kindly and generous dispositions of the inhabitants. Such is evidently the wish of the framers of this new scheme of National Education. It was heretofore the maxim, and the practice to govern by dissention, *divide & impera*. It is unfortunate, if not perverse, that the first attempt at harmony and conciliation should be met with repugnance, and become the cause of discontent with Government, and aggravated discord among the subjects.



If this should continue, it will effectually defeat the wise and benevolent intention of our Governor, without answering the ends of the discontented. It cannot be expected, that all Protestants will be dissuaded or deterred from sending their children to the National Schools. There is no authority among them, equal to produce this effect. The people will not withhold their children from good instruction, at a convenient school for five days in the week, because the Priest is allowed to teach his young people in the same place on the sixth. If they be employed in reading the most edifying and intelligible parts of scripture in school, they may think Saturday and Sunday, sufficient for the doctrinal instructions of their Parents and Minister. If the Catholic children cannot now be restrained from attending the schools of the Society, it will be more difficult to keep Presbyterian children from the National Seminaries. These feelings will gradually gain ground; and all people will send their children to the most convenient places of education. If, on the other hand, the opposition to the national plan should succeed, so as to prevent all Protestants from availing themselves of this establishment, the consequence will be that the Roman Catholics alone will enjoy a monopoly of its Education, Schools and Books, with its Patronage and Fund. But though the Synod of Ulster may have this influence with their own people: there are several other bodies of Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, &c. who cannot be expected to conform to their rule.

Thus the complete success of this opposition, would give the Roman Catholics a monopoly of the plan of education; a partial failure would equally disappoint the hopes both of the Government and the zealous Protestants; a total dereliction of the plan would entail our present distraction upon succeeding generations.

Your friend and well-wisher,

ERASMUS.

## AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

WE have received "the Reports of the American Unitarian Association, prepared for the sixth Anniversary, May, 24, 1831." The pages devoted to "*Domestic Affairs*" are filled with cheering information, and we present our readers with the following extracts from the "Report of the *Foreign Secretary* to the Executive Committee."

## EDITORS.

"The religious affairs of Ireland, at the time of my visit to that country, were approaching an interesting crisis. It happened there, as it occurred here, that in the silent and unquestioned progress of opinion, many of the ministers of the Synod of Ulster had departed from the rigid authority of the Presbyterian standards, and adopted more liberal views of Christian truth. For this crime they were at length, in a manner, called to account. For successive years an ardent controversy was carried on—not from the press alone, as in this country, but face to face, at the public meetings of the Synod. I need not go into particulars, as the whole history is well known. Suffice it to say, that the liberal members of the Synod, in the spirit of their religion and the love of peace, desired to maintain their ancient connexion with the Presbyterian church. They contended earnestly for the Protestant right to inquire and judge for themselves respecting religious doctrine, and denied the authority of any human being to call them to account. The Orthodox members insisted on the right to judge them for their faith, and to exclude them from fellowship, if in their opinion it were found heretical. The discussion had been animated, severe, and powerful. It was drawing toward a close when I arrived upon the scene. I had the honor of seeing and knowing the upright and devoted men, who had stood forth so intrepidly for the rights of conscience and in opposition to spiritual domination. I was witness of their conversation, I saw something of the trial through which they were passing, and have brought away feelings of respect, affection, and sympathy, which never can die away from my heart, so long as truth and integrity are honorable names among men. The result of the struggle was what had been anticipated, and is well known. Our Unitarian brethren formed a new Presbytery, in which I trust they will enjoy the full measure of the liberty and peace which in their ancient connexion were denied them. And though compelled, contrary to their habits and their inclination, to enter upon a controversial war, we may hope that it will be overruled, as similar events were overruled in this country, to the more firm establishment and more wide diffusion of the simple truth."

"The excitement which thus existed in the north of Ireland, extended forward to the south, and I was present at a meeting of the friends of Unitarianism in Dublin, at which the feelings called forth by the solemn crisis were uttered with great fervor and power.

There had long existed in that city, as in Belfast and other places, societies of Liberal Christians, who worshipped God according to their consciences and left their fellow christians to do the same, without attaching themselves to any party in the church. But the times were changed and they could do so no longer. They were compelled to assume an attitude and take a name; and consequently there have suddenly appeared to spring up about forty churches, bearing the Unitarian name, and many of them willing to associate in defence of their calumniated faith. The Unitarian Christian Society of Ireland is organized, and we hail many among the devout and intelligent inhabitants of that island as our open coadjutors in the holy cause of religious freedom and christian truth.

"I have only to add a few words respecting Geneva, in which place I spent a few days. This undoubtedly is one of the most interesting spots in Christendom. The past history of the Genevan church, as one of the elder and most illustrious daughters of the Reformation, its advancement in liberality beyond the other reformed churches, the obloquy to which it has in consequence been exposed, and the violence and perseverance of the recent assaults upon its fame, all conspire to render it an object of intense interest, and have drawn toward it alike the regards of the friends and the enemies of religious progress."

"The Geneva church is a national establishment, as truly as the English church; being under the control of the government of the state, and its ministers being supported from the treasury of the commonwealth. It is of course subject to all the evils which spring from such an arrangement; of which not the least is the difficulty of amending old abuses, and reforming inconvenient practices. Hence it is its greater honor, that it has stepped forward in the cause of theological improvement beyond the rest of the Protestant world; for it is the nature of an establishment to remain stationary, yet Geneva, has made signal advances. It has thus drawn upon itself the enmity of the Orthodox in all quarters of the christian world. Within a few years systematic efforts have been made to produce a revolution in opinion. Strangers from abroad, emissaries of foreign nations, have interfered to decry the ministers as heretics and deceivers, to render the people dissatisfied, and to convulse the peaceful community with a polemic war, and restore the doctrines of Calvin to their ancient influence. In consequence of these attempts, the authority which pertains to an establishment to declare what shall be preached by its ministers was exercised, and measures were taken to prevent the discussion of doctrinal differences in the national pulpits. The Calvinists, who could not remain in the establishment on this condition, formed themselves into a society of dissenters, which was tolerated by Government, and has continued in existence to the present time. It has done what it could to carry back the people to the old doctrines of Calvin, and alienate them from the present order of things. But I could not learn that its success had been great. The people are still attached to the existing institutions; and know the piety and fidelity of their ministers too well to withdraw from them their confidence and affection."

"It has been the great object of the national church to keep the people from the agitation of questions which would endanger the ancient harmony of this little community. This is the anxious desire of the community itself. The ministers, who, though liberal, are by no means of an exact uniformity of faith, acquiesce in this state of the public mind. They preach the great principles of truth and duty in which all can agree, and leave untouched those discussions which might kindle sectarian fires. Even the press, notwithstanding the virulent assaults made upon the faith and character of the clergy, has remained comparatively silent, through an extreme reluctance to all theological agitation. Individuals however there are, who greatly question the propriety of this course, and would have the press made active. Of these an aged layman, M. de Luc, had just published a small treatise on the trinity when I visited the city, and M. Chenevière, the distinguished Rector of the Academy, was preparing a work on the same subject, which has since been printed. Whether the controversy will be pursued, and if it be, what will be its effects, time only can disclose."

"The measures which were taken by the authorities of Geneva to prevent the growth of doctrinal controversy have been represented as persecution and a violent outcry has been made as if this were the consequence of the theological opinions of the clergy. Now those measures may have been wrong and unwise; but they had their origin simply in the fact, that the church is a national establishment; and in what was done it only acted consistently with its character as an establishment. A national church never allows its ministers so infringe its rules of discipline. All we can ask is, that it exercise its authority with moderation and equity; and this praise I think we cannot withhold in the present instance, however we may disapprove the principle of state establishments in general. The virulence of the outcry seems to have arisen from confounding together the proceedings at Geneva, and those in the neighbouring Canton de Vaud. In the latter, where the establishment is Orthodox, violent measures have been resorted to, of banishment, &c. for the purpose of silencing the more zealous Orthodox, who exercised a warmer zeal in their religion than the government of the church thought reasonable; and this persecution of warm Calvinists by lukewarm Calvinists has been all laid at the door of the Unitarians of Geneva. But the truth is, that Geneva tolerates these zealous Calvinists, allowing them to worship quietly within her walls, while the Orthodox state imprisons and banishes them; a state, which at the same time shows its zeal for Orthodoxy by anathemas against the heresy of Geneva.

"I find that I have left myself no room for enlarging on several other topics, as I designed. I will therefore close with briefly saying, that as far as I could learn, there is little danger of any retrograde movement in religious opinion. The people will continue faithful to their light. There are evils attendant on the present form of their religious institutions, which are not inconsiderable in the view of an American Congregationalist, and of which they themselves appear to be not altogether insensible. But they will not go back to Calvinism. They are, however, less grounded in

the evidences of the doctrines they hold than they should be, and their extreme aversion to theological controversy may [expose individuals to the power of able assailants without the requisite means of defence. In this respect, and in the consequent greater clearness and definiteness of their views, the Unitarians of Great Britain and America may possibly be considered as having the advantage of them.—They are accustomed to regard practical religion, founded on the leading undisputed truths of the New Testament, as the one only thing. This their ministers inculcate in fervent and eloquent discourses from the pulpit, and by a thorough course of religious education, through which all the young are expected to pass. This latter feature in their system, of which something has been known here by means of the Geneva Catechism, is one of their favorable and happy distinctions. Their love of peace is certainly another. And another is, the consistent fidelity with which they have adhered to the principles of the Reformation, and carried perpetually forward that glorious work, when nearly all Christendom beside had come to a stand;—having abolished subscription to a creed, and possessing a translation of the Scriptures, which, instead of being slavishly bound to it, they seek to improve and perfect by frequent revisions, and a catechism and liturgy which they are ready to alter whenever they find they can make them better. In these things the church of Geneva is an example to the christian world. May it have grace to continue faithful, and may the other churches have grace to imitate its fidelity.

“I have thus, gentlemen, briefly sketched a few of the impressions which you have requested me to put on paper, as the substance of a communication to the Association. I wish they were more worthy of your attention. Such as they are, they are very cheerfully and respectfully submitted

By your friend and servant,

HENRY WARE, JR.,

*For. Secy. A. U. A.*

CAMBRIDGE, MAY 24, 1831.

---

SERMONS &c., BY THE LATE REV. JOHN HINCKS.

---

To give a satisfactory Review of a volume consisting of more than 500 pages, in a periodical so limited as ours, would be obviously impossible. We could indeed fill our pages with quotations that would richly repay the reader; for we think that very few preachers so young, and so constantly called on for the instantaneous exercise of his powers, as the young Minister of such a Congregation as Renshaw-street, in Liverpool, must be, have left behind them sermons of such value; so feeling, so impressive and so instructive.



We can only extract one or two passages at random, from the volume, premising that there is an affectionate memoir prefixed to it, by his early and steady friend, the Rev. John Hamilton Thom, than whom none could be better fitted for the task, having lived under the same roof with him in the Belfast College, pursuing their studies there with the same emulation and thirst for improvement; being called to another congregation of the same sentiments, in the same town, and thus continuing his intercourse with him to the very last. He has since succeeded him as Minister of Renshaw-street congregation.

#### CHRISTIAN HUMILITY.

“The links of orthodoxy have been so firmly rivetted, as to form a chain, capable of retaining within its iron embrace the mightiest minds.—After all, however, I cannot but think that the Gothic edifice at which we have been gazing, has been erected without any adequate object. It very much resembles ocean into tempest tossed, to waft a feather, or to drown a fly. It is the religion of Calvin not of Christ. Let us endeavour, by means of an analogy with things more familiar to us, to understand a little more clearly the extraordinary nature of this system. We are all, it is to be hoped, in the habit of attributing to the Almighty the success which may attend us in every occupation in which we engage. We implore the Divine blessing upon our labours, and when they have proved successful, we are grateful to our God. Suppose, now, my brethren, that a husbandman, who has laboured diligently to prepare his ground, and to sow good seed in the field, were disposed, as all should be, after having reaped an abundant harvest, to return thanks to the God who gave it. What should we think of such a person, if, instead of blessing his bountiful Creator for having given him a good soil, and favoured him with the means of improving it, and given him diligence to employ those means, and, finally, for having blessed his rising crops with rain to refresh and sun to ripen it; if, instead of thus piously ascribing all secondary causes to the agency of the great first cause, and looking through nature up to nature’s God, he should fancy, on a sudden, that he had been favoured with a miracle,—should refer to the third chapter of the Book of Genesis, and finding there the words written, “cursed is the ground for thy sake,” should strenuously maintain that the ground was, in itself and by nature, utterly incapable of producing anything good, and fitted only for the nourishment of thorns, and thistles, and tares, and everything mischievous, and acting upon this idea, should bless God for having miraculously, and with a view to his own particular harvest, prepared and renewed the soil, and altogether changed its nature and properties? What would you think, my brethren, of such a person? Would you not conclude that he had lost his senses? Yet such, I must confess, or differing from it in no essential particular, appear to me to be the commonly received doctrines of

original sin, regeneration and sanctification, equally unphilosophical in themselves, and little better supported by Scripture."

#### THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE.

"There is nothing which has a more powerful tendency to stimulate man to exertion than the hope of reward. The influence of this great principle pervades all classes of society, and is felt during every period of life. Yet how trivial the rewards that have fired the ambition of those who have reached even the highest pinnacle of earthly power and distinction, when contrasted with the things which God hath prepared for them that love him! What an effectual encouragement, then, to progressive improvement in virtue and holiness must the promises of the gospel present to him who believes them! Oh, my brethren, would the cares of life and the imperfections of our nature but suffer us to retain these glorious prospects continually before us; could we but acquire such an eagle gaze of faith as would enable us steadfastly to behold that sun of everlasting glory that shines for us in the gospel, we might defy the banded powers of earth and hell to terrify, or all the temptations of the world united to seduce us from the path of duty.

#### THE WAGES OF SIN.

"We come now to consider how far the great principle, asserted in the text, is generally admitted and acted upon in society. Here we are met at once by what is called the orthodox doctrine of the vicarious atonement. It is asserted by the supporters of this doctrine, that our Lord Jesus Christ, himself perfectly upright and innocent, suffered upon the cross in the place of believers, and under the imputation of their guilt; and that it is only by virtue of this vicarious atonement, and of the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, that believers are freed from the punishment due to their own sins, as well as from the imputation of Adam's sin, and become heirs of everlasting life and happiness. Here, then, we have the Almighty represented to us as departing altogether, in the most important of all his dispensations, from a principle by which he had formerly declared, by his prophet, his determination to be regulated. We behold the immutable God erasing with one hand what he had written with the other. We see him condemning the innocent to the severest tortures, that he may be enabled, forsooth, without compromising his justice, to extend free pardon to the guilty. This doctrine, then, my brethren, is plainly and directly at variance with the principle asserted in the text. If by Jesus Christ suffering in the place of sinners, be meant merely this, that he suffered, in the introduction of a religion which was to deliver them from the power of sin, and in the exhibition of an obedience, as a reward for which he was to be empowered to bestow upon such as should believe in him and act conformably, life everlasting, then does this doctrine appear not merely free from the imputation of involving an act of injustice, but likewise as illustrative, in the clearest and most beautiful manner, of the divine goodness and mercy; but if, on the the other hand, as there is too much reason to fear it generally is, the death of Christ be represented to us in the light of an infliction of punishment on

the part of the Deity, as appeasing his wrath, satisfying his justice, or illustrating his holiness, by an exhibition of his hatred of sin, then can we no longer hesitate for a moment to pronounce this doctrine, so far as our judgment can guide us, to be dishonourable at once to the character of the God who sent, and of the Saviour who suffered; impeaching the innocence of the one, and compromising the justice of the other; a doctrine not merely unauthorized by scripture, but contradictory to it; not merely unsupported by reason but revolting to it; a doctrine, in fine, which bears upon its aspect evident marks of being the offspring of a barbarous and scholastic age, when cruelty and subtlety, by an unhallowed union, seem to have given birth to an opinion the most shocking by which Christianity has been deformed."

#### CHRIST'S CHARACTER OF CHILDREN.

"Secondly, is it not still more difficult, if possible, to reconcile the conduct and language of Christ on this occasion with another doctrine of the same school, namely, the possible condemnation, and consequent everlasting misery of infants? Is it not enough for the afflicted parent to be called upon to follow to an untimely grave the object of so many fond anticipations, without having his imagination haunted, in addition by such horrid dreams, as a belief in this doctrine might awaken? But where, in the name of religion and of common sense, where is the foundation of it to be discovered? Who can be so infatuated as, for the sake of making a favourite theory appear more consistent, to represent a benevolent and merciful Deity as wreaking his vengeance upon helpless infancy, or vindicating his justice at the expense of those who have never been capable of crime? How different the view which bereaved parents are encouraged, by our Lord's language and conduct in the case before us, to take of the prospects of their children! The Saviour of the world, whilst on earth, in consideration of their innocence and purity, which he pointed out as an object worthy of the imitation of his disciples, took little children in his arms and blessed them. Can we believe, that the same blessed Jesus, when he shall come as Judge of the world, in the glory of his Father with the angels, is to become the agent of omnipotence in consigning little children, no less pure and innocent, to everlasting perdition?"

---

#### OBITUARY.

.Died, in Arthur-street, Miss Haven, in the 66th year of her age, having evinced throughout life an earnest zeal for the pure doctrines of the Gospel—an unwavering steadiness in what she believed to be the truth, and that singleness of mind, and simplicity of character which proved her to have possessed an unusual portion of that spirit of Christ without which we can be none of his.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q., and several other articles came too late for our present Number.

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

---

NO. II.

MARCH, 1832.

VOL. III.

---

ON THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT OF THE CREATION.

IT would not be at all advisable in a periodical like yours, which circulates throughout the country and is read in distant places, to devote its pages to local controversies, or to have a reference to discussions in the newspapers of the day. You have, I think, fallen occasionally into this error; but it is my purpose at present, to keep clear of all such allusions, and at the same time to throw out some observations grounded on the simple fact, that the attention of a portion of the public has been directed to the bearing of the science of Geology upon the truths of Revelation. These last words I use because they express the view which some well-meaning but injudicious persons have taken of the subject.—But my opinion is, that it is impossible that the science of Geology can ever affect the truths of Revelation, because the one treats exclusively of material changes, and Revelation is concerned with nothing but the moral and religious nature of man.

It must appear to every one that takes a comprehensive view of the matter, that it is very dangerous to set Revelation and Geology at issue, so that if the one be true, the other must be false. If it were clear that the conclusions from these two sources of knowledge were at variance with each other; so as to be irreconcilable, the minds of intelligent men would be left in great perplexity. From the nature of the human mind it is impossible that facts should not so impress it as to counteract the written memorial—not that men are thereby led to go against the authority of God as some would have it; but that they find an insuperable difficulty in believing that such assertions have God's authority at all. It is therefore true prudence as well as true philosophy, to keep the province of Revelation totally distinct from that of physical science.

At a time when so many are led by mere names instead of the reason of things, and willing to put implicit credence in an assertion, simply because it comes from one who may be zealous for reputed orthodoxy: it may be of some use to those who have freedom of mind enough to look into your heretical pages, to quote one of the standard authorities among those called orthodox divines. The book to which I allude, is "Reflections upon the Books of the Holy Scripture to establish the truth of the christian religion, by P. Allix"—and the quotations are taken from the re-publication of the work in Watson's Theological Tracts. In these quotations there is nothing bearing upon the geological question, for there was none such at the time: but they are important in showing that a very eminent writer in defending the authority of Scripture does not think it necessary to proceed farther than to maintain, that Moses truly reported the traditionary history of his own day, and to show from the few links in the chain between him and the earliest of our race, that the traditions so handed down were highly credible.

After speaking of the two sorts of inspiration—the one by way of revelation—the other by way of direction; he goes on to say, "Now I affirm, that when Moses wrote the book of Genesis, he had only the second sort of prophetic influences, and not the first, although in our disputes against Atheists, to convince them by matters of fact, we consider him only as an historian, who might have written his book without any other particular direction, and might have preserved in it the memory of those ancient events which were then generally known. Now what side soever divines may take on their disputes against the Atheists, I may easily establish my assertion: first, because it is not necessary to suppose an entire revelation, when tradition being distinct enough is sufficient to preserve a clear remembrance of all those facts."

Again he says, "The conclusions that I draw out of the premises is; that, first, I assert that Moses, that famous Hebrew, who was designed to be the heir of Pharaoh's daughter, is the true and sole author of the book of Genesis. Secondly, I maintain that this being once granted, he could not according to his way of writing record these important transactions he relates,



otherwise, than they really came to pass. Thirdly, I maintain that though he had not been an eye witness of the creation of the world, he hath yet *made the description of it according to such an authentic tradition*, not only of the Moabites, of the Ammonites, of the Ishmaelites, and of the Edomites, who were all of Sem's posterity, and amongst whom he had been travelling for forty years together; but also of the Egyptians, of his own people, and in a word, of all men then living in the world." Here there is an able defender of revelation against infidels, who thinks it not necessary for his cause to proceed upon the supposition, that the historical facts which Moses recorded were communicated to him by express revelation from God.

Bishop Sumner, in his Treatise on the Records of Creation, says, "whence, however, it is natural to ask, was the knowledge of these facts derived by Moses? Only two answers present themselves: it must have been derived either from inspiration delivered immediately to himself, or from information originally revealed and preserved from the earliest times. *I subscribe to the latter of these opinions*; because if it is probable, as has already incidentally appeared, that the Deity would declare himself to the chief of his earthly creatures, man, on his first creation; a farther interposition for the same purpose would be unnecessary, and if unnecessary, improbable." This reasoning acquires additional force, from the fact, that this tradition need only have passed through seven hands before it came to Moses, or as Allix expresses it. "From Adam to Noah there is but one man, viz. Methuselah, who joined hands with both. From Noah to Abraham, but one and him who saw them both for a considerable time. From Abraham to Joseph but one, viz. Isaac, Joseph's grandfather. From Joseph to Moses but one, Amron, who might have seen Joseph long."

As an historian Moses seems to be pledged for the period in which the earth with its present surface was reduced to the state in which it was adapted for our race—for the origin of the human species—for all the great changes that took place in the history of man, as far as he has recorded it. To all this we have abundant and most satisfactory confirmation; and we see at once, that it has infinitely stronger claims to our reception

and confidence, than any other that ever existed. Moses begins his history with announcing the all-important truth, that God created the heavens and the earth. This truth, it was for obvious reasons, his great object to place strongly and keep continually before the minds of the Jews at the time when they were so liable to be led astray after strange gods.

It is not necessary to suppose, that Moses was at all acquainted with the process of creation, or with any change that our globe may have undergone in periods prior to its present form of existence. Nor if he had known could he have expressed it intelligibly to the Jews in the language that they used : nor would he have acted so absurdly as to draw off their attention from the great objects, to which as their legislator it was his wish to direct their thoughts, by amusing and puzzling them with stratifications and formations, and dips—and organic remains and so forth.

Supposing for a moment the whole process of creation as recorded by Moses to be a mere allegory, this would not affect in the slightest degree his character as an historian, because all this was prior to history, and incapable of being known in an historical way. Now though this account is not allegory, as some very wise men have supposed, yet the mode of conveying the general truth is adapted to those whose minds he wished to impress. Any philosophical or metaphysical mode of stating the existence of God, and the creation of the universe according to modern astronomical discoveries would have been most absurd, and totally unintelligible. Moses impressed the great truth, that every thing was created by God—by narrating the creation dramatically, by representing God as actually speaking—and seeing—and working, and ceasing from his work. This mode was suited to the capacity of the people for whose use he wrote : but it would be giving infidelity a vast advantage, indeed, if we were to think it necessary to maintain the infallible certainty of the order, or of the uses assigned to the different parts. For we may observe, that there is one important matter to be settled with astronomers, before we come to the geological question. No science seems more firmly founded than astronomy, yet these religionists must abandon it, because it is most expressly contradicted in the be-

ginning of Genesis. One of the great truths of Astronomy is the motion of the earth round the sun at a certain immense velocity—with a tendency to gravitate towards that sun. What was the earth then moving round for four days before the sun was made? This earth was also bringing forth grass, and herbs, yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit, before it was as it were hurled by the Almighty's power to begin its daily and annual revolutions. The great purposes to be answered by this luminary, are not such as astronomical science discovers—merely to divide the day and night—and to be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and for years. Nor is the moon according to modern discoveries, to be represented as an independent light, or as a source of light at all, any more than the earth, but both are reflectors of the light of the sun. Nor is Moses answerable for all the stars being made on the same day with the sun and moon, seeing that philosophers and divines now believe them to be vast suns, scattered throughout the immensity of space—each attended with systems of worlds—to say nothing of the astronomical error of ranking the planets and the stars together.

Now we maintain, that if the account in Genesis be taken literally, there is a greater repugnance between Moses and the astronomer, than between Moses and the geologist. I need not say, that I do not feel the slightest difficulty on either subject, according to the view that I take of the popular manner, in which Moses endeavours to impress the great truth of God being the creator of heaven and earth.

I have hitherto presumed that there is some inconsistency between the discoveries of Geology, and the Mosaic account, but I cannot see that there is the slightest. I have no doubt that geologists in their conclusions have outrun their proofs, and that they are building upon hypothetical foundations, as to many of their systems—but whatever be the truth in geological science, Moses is not implicated, nor is his authority or fidelity in the least impaired. He states simply and sublimely, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth: and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." There is

here no limit whatever fixed to the commencement of the creation—no data for measuring the interval between this *beginning* and the reduction of the chaotic mass of this earth to its state of order—no obstacle to admitting ages upon ages—forms after forms—for the existence of this earth; more than sufficient to account for all the stratifications and petrifications, and primary, secondary, ternary formations, and so on to millions upon millions of years if necessary.

It is equally absurd, to consider Moses as speaking of the natural day of four and twenty hours. It would have been preposterous in him, to have endeavoured to explain to the Jews, that there were periods of time before the revolution of the earth round its axis, or to enter into any metaphysical speculations of time, being marked by the sequence of events and so forth. He merely put days for periods, without deeming it necessary to note that he was so doing, before there was any body according to his order of creation, to mark the alternation of night and day.

Dr. Chalmers seems to have seen this in a true point of view, as appears from the following quotation from his Evidences.

“We will not try to make our escape by denying the truth of the Geological speculation. We are not afraid to own that we are impressed by its evidence, and feel our imagination regaled by its brilliancy. We will not try to do away the supposed falsehood by asserting what has been called the Mosaical antiquity of the world; but we deny that our Saviour ever asserted this antiquity. It is true, that he gives his distinct testimony to the divine legation of Moses; but does Moses ever say, that when God created the heavens and the earth, he did more at the time alluded to, than transform out of previously existing materials? Or does he ever say, that there was not an interval of many ages, betwixt the first act of creation, described in the first verse of the book of Genesis, and said to have been performed at the *beginning*, and those more detailed operations, the account of which commences at the second verse, and which are described to us under the allegory of days. Or does he ever bring forward any literal interpretations of this history, which bring him into the slightest contact with the doctrines of Geology?

Or finally, does he ever make us to understand, that the genealogies of man went any further than to fix the antiquity of the species; and of consequence that they left the antiquity of the Globe, a free subject for the speculation of philosophers."

Bishop Sumner, in the same work which I have already quoted, observes:—

"The account of the creation given by Moses, does not profess to furnish any thing like a systematic or elaborate detail of the mode in which the materials of the earth were brought to their actual form and situation. The warmest lover of geology would scarcely expect to find this in the record; the very terms in which such an account could be expressed requiring an advanced state of science; and the information when conveyed, being altogether unprofitable as to those uses which are the proper objects of Revelation. To know his connexion with the Creator and moral Governor of the world, is necessary to the virtue and happiness of man. To investigate the regular laws to which the created world conforms, or the process by which it was reduced to that obedience, is a delightful exercise of the reason he possesses; but is totally unconnected with those higher interests which a revelation has in view."

"But any curious information as to the structure of the earth ought still less to be expected, by any one acquainted with the general character of the Mosaic records. There is nothing in them either to gratify the curiosity, or repress the researches of mankind, when brought, in the progress of cultivation, to calculate the motions of the heavenly bodies, or speculate on the formation of the globe. The expressions of Moses are evidently accommodated to the first and familiar notions derived from the sensible appearances of the earth and heavens: and the absurdity of supposing, that the literal interpretations of terms in Scripture ought to interfere with the advancement of philosophical inquiry, would have been as generally forgotten as renounced, if the oppressors of Galileo had not found a place in history. The concessions, if they may be so called, of the believers in Revelation on this point, have been amply remunerated by the sublime discoveries as to the prospective wisdom of the Creator, which have been gradually unfolded by the progressive improvements in



astronomical knowledge. We may trust with the same confidence as to any future results from geology, if that science should ever find its Newton, and break through the various obstacles peculiar to that study, which have hitherto precluded any general solution of its numerous and opposite phænomena."

"The alternate revolutions which Cuvier supposes, are in the science of geology, what systems beyond our own are in astronomy. They are matters of curious reflection and sublime interest; but they lead us beyond the regions of legitimate science or certain history, into those of vague speculation. All, however, that I am concerned to establish, is the unreasonableness of supposing that geological discoveries, as far as they have hitherto proceeded, are hostile to the Mosaic account of the creation. No rational naturalist would attempt to describe, either from the brief description in Genesis or otherwise, the process by which our system was brought from confusion into a regular and habitable state. No rational theologian will direct his hostility against any theory, which, acknowledging the agency of the Creator, only attempts to point out the secondary instruments he has employed."

"The certainty of one event of that kind [the deluge] would appear from the discoveries of geologists, even if it were not declared by the sacred historian. But we are not called upon to deny the possible existence of previous worlds, from the wreck of which our globe was organized, and the ruins of which are now furnishing matter to our curiosity. The belief of their existence is indeed consistent with rational probability, and somewhat confirmed by the discoveries of astronomy, as the plurality of worlds."

I do not pretend that Bishop Sumner admits the speculations of geologists to be well founded. All that I mean to prove by the preceding quotations from him and others, is, that these strenuous advocates of Revelation saw the propriety of keeping the great question as free from being involved in other matters not necessarily connected with it as possible. It must be very obvious to the real friends of Revelation—to all except those who make a trade of excitement—that the interests of religion are materially concerned in the adoption of this wise and truly philosophical course. True re-

ligion throws no obstacle in the way of the full exercise of our rational and inquisitive faculties. It only prescribes the spirit in which all inquiries should be carried on—the spirit of humility and diffidence—which is also the spirit of true philosophy—aware of the fate of all former dogmatism, and sensible that every year is opening such vast fields of observation, as show the necessity of the utmost caution in drawing peremptory conclusions from partial or insulated facts. Geology perhaps, has not been free from this error, because it alleges indubitable certainty, as to the periods of time that have been requisite for certain changes; without taking into the account, that as these changes were prior to our present state of the earth, so there may have been causes in operation then, that no one dreams of now.

I do not expect that all those who agree with me in the general position, will acquiesce in my minute observations. Of course I would give the latitude which I take, and would propose those remarks with diffidence and humility; but as we value the interests of true Religion, we should preserve it free from intermixture with geological or physical speculations, and keep constantly in mind, that all the writers of scripture, wrote on these subjects in the popular language, and conformably to the popular notions of the day; and that the truths which they were commissioned to reveal, were those that bore upon man's character, conduct and hopes—those that were profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God might be perfected, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

V. D. M.

P. S.—I think it right to acknowledge, that the quotation from Doctor Chalmers, is copied from a Letter in The Belfast Newsletter, as I have not the work at hand to refer to for verification.

## NOTICE OF WAKEFIELD ON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH IN THE METROPOLIS.

---

MOST of our readers will no doubt recollect the case of Mr. E. G. Wakefield, who was convicted of the abduction of Miss Turner, and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Newgate. It is the same who has written this volume which is full of most important information, with respect to the state of vice, immorality, and crime in the metropolis.—We make one or two extracts, that bear more immediately upon religious concerns.

“From the moment that a prisoner enters the cells of Newgate, no pains are spared to excite in him a strong sentiment of religion; and this course is pursued towards all, without distinction, who are considered to be in danger. I doubt very much whether the attempt ever succeeded until after a prisoner is offered for execution. The Rev. Mr. Cotter, the ordinary of Newgate, who has been chaplain to the jail for more than a dozen years, has often acknowledged to me, that he does not remember an instance of what he considered sincere conversion to religious sentiments, except in prisoners who were executed. A very great show of religious fervour is often made by prisoners, even from the moment of their entrance into Newgate, still more after they enter the cells: but in such cases when the punishment is finally settled at something less than death, the prisoner invariably behaves as if all his religion had been hypocrisy. Still there can be no doubt that a considerable number of those who are executed, die with a firm expectation of happiness in another world. I cannot explain the contradiction—let the reader judge for himself.

Two persons, say A. and B., are ordered for execution, they both display the liveliest faith in the doctrines of christianity. Apparently the minds of both are equally filled with religious thoughts to the exclusion of what belongs to this world. And the sincerity of both is equally manifest; for any one who watch them may be sure that they have *ceased to think of their own situation*, otherwise than as they look forward to the approaching execution, “as the happiest moment of their lives.” I quote the words which are frequently uttered by persons ordered for execution, and to all appearance with entire sincerity, for it is an undubitable fact that nearly in all such cases of religious fervour, the bodily health of the enthusiast is excellent, his sleep sound, his appetite good, his pulse steady, and his skin moist; whilst speaking generally, he who goes to the scaffold scoffing at religion, is full of bodily disease, of which the main symptoms are want of appetite and sleep, a rattling or fainting pulse, and a skin, hot and dry, as if he were in a burning fever. Now in the supposed case of A and B, the physical symptoms are

precisely alike, whilst the language and conduct of the two men, indicate the same degree of religious fervour. A. is hanged blessing the executioner, and lost to all but one sentiment, that of confidence in his own salvation by faith. B. is spared, and within a week, is heard laughing or railing at all religion. I have said before that it is chance, which generally decides who shall be hanged and who spared. Consequently we are not to suppose, that A's greatest criminality was the cause of his greater enthusiasm; nor can we indeed presume that his religious feelings were more profound than those of B. Judging from several actual cases of the kind, I should say that if B had been hanged and A spared, the same conduct would have attended the same circumstances, without regard to the person concerned."

The following is a striking account of what is called the condemned service.

"The condemned service is conducted with peculiar solemnity, being attended by the sheriff's in their great gold chains, and is in other ways calculated to make a strong impression on the minds of the congregation, who may be considered as representing the criminals of the metropolis. Whether the impression be a good or a bad one I leave to the reader to decide: but in order that he may have the necessary materials for deciding justly, I lay before him the following description of a condemned service, premising only this—that not a circumstance is stated which I have not witnessed."

"The sheriffs are already seated in their own pew, accompanied by their under sheriffs, and two friends drawn thither by curiosity. Not far from them appear two tall footmen, swelling with pride at their state liveries. The ordinary is in his desk: his surplice is evidently fresh from the mangle: and those who see him every day observe an air of peculiar solemnity, and perhaps of importance in his face and manner. The clerk is busied searching out the psalms proper for the occasion."

"The tragedy begins. Enter first the School-master and his pupils, then the prisoners for trial, next the transports, amongst whom are the late companions of the condemned men; and then the women. Lastly come the condemned. They are four in number. The first is a youth, about eighteen apparently. He is to die for stealing, in a dwelling-house, goods valued at more than £5. His features have no felonious cast; on the contrary they are handsome, intelligent, and even pleasing. Craft, and fear, and debauchery, have not yet had time to put decided marks on him. He steps boldly, with his head upright, looks to the women's gallery and smiles. His intention is to pass for a brave fellow with those who have brought him to this untimely end; but the attempt fails; fear is stronger than vanity. Suddenly his head droops, and as he sits down his bent knees tremble and knock together. The second is an older criminal, on whose countenance villainy is distinctly written. He has been sentenced to death before, but reprieved, and transported for life. Having incurred the penalty of death by the act in itself innocent, of returning to England, he is now about to die for

a burglary committed since his return. His glance at the Sheriff and the Ordinary tells of scorn and defiance. But even this hardened ruffian will wince at the most trying moment, as we shall see presently. The third is a Sheep-stealer, a poor ignorant creature, in whose case there are mitigating points, but who is to be hanged in consequence of some report having reached the Secretary of State that this is not his first offence ; and secondly because of late a good many sheep have been stolen by other people. He is quite content to die : indeed the exertions of the Chaplain and others have brought him firmly to believe that his situation is enviable, and that the gates of heaven are open to receive him. Now observe the fourth, that miserable old man in a tattered suit of black. He is already half dead. He is said to be a clergyman of the Church of England, [the Rev. Peter Fenn] and has been convicted of forgery. The great efforts to save his life not only by his friends but by many utter strangers, fed him with hope until his doom was sealed. He is now under the influence of despair. He staggers towards the pew, reels into it, stumbles forward, flings himself to the ground, and by a curious twist of the spine buries his head under his body. The sheriff's shudder ; their inquisitive friends come forward ; the keeper frowns on the excited congregation ; the lately smirking footmen close their eyes and forget their liveries ; the ordinary clasps his hands ; the turnkeys cry " hush ;" and the old clerk lifts up his cracked voice, saying. " Let us sing to the praise and glory of God."

We may leave these passages to make their own impression—but it would be strange indeed, if there were not enough here to dissuade from that abominable perversion of religion, which is also too common every where as well as in Newgate, and in other cases beside that of condemned criminals,—the practice of working upon the agitated feelings of condemned culprits till they excite them to enthusiasm, and display before assembled multitudes, as a man prepared for the society of the blest, one who had been a few days before imbrued in another's blood : whose sorrow is the effect of terror, and whose ardour of enthusiasm would cool to the lowest point, if once released from the fear of the gallows.

And yet all this is the natural consequence of the notion that adaptation to heaven to the company of the just made perfect, to the presence of the mediator and of God, is brought about in an instant of time by a sudden, supernatural, and irresistible influence.



## AUTHENTICITY OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

THE authenticity of the Apostles' Creed, depends entirely upon this tradition : that the apostles after they had been filled with the Holy Spirit, and before they separated to preach in different parts, composed this symbol or creed, that they might not seem to be preaching opposite doctrines, and that the church might have a general formula to be professed by those who offered themselves to be baptized. The date of the composition is uncertain ; some contending that it was composed immediately after the effusion of the Holy Spirit, and others ascribing it to the time of Herod Agrippa's persecution.

Against the truth of this tradition, the following are the principal arguments.

1. It is not credible that Luke, who so particularly relates the effusion of the Holy Spirit and the other affairs of the church about that time, would have omitted so very important a fact, when he gives a copy of a letter written by the apostles on a subject comparatively trifling. Acts xv. 28, &c.

2. Nor is it possible that this creed (if in being) would not have been alluded to in some of the epistles, or that the disciples would not have referred to it for instruction, in any doubtful matter.

3. Any creed known to be the production of the apostles would undoubtedly have been appealed to, in the different controversies that arose : there is no record of such an appeal in history : not even so late as the Arian Controversy, when the Arians would have been inclined to adopt it, in preference to the Nicene.

4. The great diversity of forms of belief which we find in different churches, and the writings of the Fathers is unaccountable upon the supposition, that any one was acknowledged to be of apostolic authority. Even the most zealous defenders of the apostles' creed, are obliged to admit so great a latitude in the use of it, as sufficiently proves at least, that compliance with a particular creed was not considered necessary to salvation. [It is further admitted by them, that several of the articles now in the creed were not in it formerly. viz. " He descended into hell." " The communion of

saints," not in any creed till the 5th century. The clause of Life Everlasting was omitted in some and inserted in others.]

5. If the apostles had composed any creed, they would have inserted only what was essential, or at least would have preferred the most important points of the christian belief. Who will say that no person can be a christian or be saved without believing that Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judea when Christ was crucified. May not many very good christians remain ignorant of this fact; or might not a person even doubt of the truth of that fact and still be a good christian? Is it not more important to know who were the twelve apostles and a thousand other things, than who was the governor of Judea?

6. The Nicene Creed, is the first that was regularly read in the churches: and this was not done till the sixth century. Is it not probable that they would have preferred a creed known to be written by the apostles?

However ancient then this creed may be, it should not be imposed upon the people as of apostolic origin, when there are so strong arguments against it, and such learned men as Usher, Vossius, Voetius, Wilctius and King, deny its authenticity.

---

### THIS LIFE A STATE OF PROBATION.

---

THERE are many circumstances that render the condition of humanity deeply interesting to us; we find ourselves existing in a world chequered with hopes and fears, enjoyments and miseries,—constantly presenting a new aspect,—affording no security of happiness or peace, while Time is bearing us on its silent but rapid stream into the ocean of Eternity. The days of other years are gone by, and those who spent them have passed away; they may still live in the page of history, or be enshrined in the temple of the memory; but their lives are as a dream of the night, as a tale that is told—"the place that once knew them shall know them no more *for ever*." But the fate of those who have sunk into the grave, affords a wholesome admonition to the surviving, teaching them that it is appointed unto all

men to die. It is not only when pestilence and famine stalk abroad over the land, and make the nation to tremble,—when foreign war or intestine rebellion sweep away our countrymen by hundreds, or some disastrous calamity has spread desolation around us, that death is urged upon our consideration; every day some new victim to the tyrant's power is preaching the melancholy lesson to busy, thoughtful man, that this is not his resting place; that here he has no abiding city. Like the Israelites of old, during their sojourn in the wilderness, we are marching forward to a Canaan of peace, and though the journey be full of danger and fatigue—though we have often to buckle on the armour of warfare, and strive with the enemy,—though we have no bread to appease our hunger, and no water to slake our thirst,—yet, trusting in the wisdom of our Leader, and the power and goodness of our God, we should press forward with zeal and fearlessness, assured that we shall at last enter the land of promise to possess it.

It is a pleasing, yet painful consideration, to look down from the elevation to which the Gospel of the blessed God has raised us, on the condition of man and of human life, where heathenism and infidelity reign,—pleasing, in as much as it exhibits the privilege we enjoy in being admitted to the knowledge of a future state, and kindles gratitude in our breast towards the God who revealed it, and the Saviour by whom it was revealed; but painful, since it presents to us so many of our fellow-creatures deprived of those great and weighty motives, which Christianity affords, to virtue of life, and purity of heart. I am far indeed from contending that morality, true, saving morality, did not and does not exist in the heathen world. I cannot read of the virtues of Socrates, Aristides, Numa, Cato, and all the great and good men, who, amid the clouds of error and superstition that overcast the nations, adorned the human character, and bore testimony to the dignity of human nature; lived to promote the happiness of their fellow-beings and secure the best interests of society,—and not believe that the smile of Heaven cheered them in Time, and the justice of Heaven rewards them in Eternity; yet what trifling incentives had they to virtue compared with those which present themselves to the Christian! The wisest philosophers of the heathen

world, could only argue of a future state from the "pleasing hope, the fond desire, the longing after immortality," which were rather the offspring of their imagination, than the result of reason, or the consciousness of nature: they could conjecture that as man exists in another state of being prior to his introduction into life,—as the insect lies for months in the nature of a worm, sinks into the dormant, inactive chrysolis, and again bursts forth into the glorious form of the painted butterfly; so may the human soul, when the earthly tabernacle has been dissolved, and it has shuffled off its 'mortal coil,' awake to a more exalted state of being, in which new scenes will be opened to its view, and increased pleasures held forth for its enjoyment; but human reason could never pass beyond the clouds of conjecture, and the wisest men of the most enlightened times left the world and their sorrowing friends, *doubting* whether a morning of immortality should dawn upon their soul, and excite to renewed activity the vigorous energies of intellect. In such a state of things men lived virtuously only from the present satisfaction which attended such a course of conduct, or the dread of that Superior Being whose power they discerned in the creation, preservation and government of the world—but thanks be to God who has brought life and immortality to light by his Son Jesus Christ, and has declared that "the day will come when all that are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." Human life is thus represented as a state of probation—a state ordained for trying and improving our character, and by this means preparing us for a more permanent existence, when time, and all the things of time shall have passed away for ever: and we are thus also invited to cultivate virtue and holiness of life with all our strength, to testify our love to God, by promoting his glory in the happiness and well-being of those around us—in as much as we know that we shall hereafter be judged "according to the deeds done in the body." If we regard our present condition in this light, we shall perceive the wisdom of God clearly exhibited in the economy of human life—"Sorrow and pain are virtue's, soil." If there were no misery, no

calamity incidental to our being, the strength of our moral principles could not be proved : for it is not when we are sailing in the gale of prosperity, feasted by pleasure and flattered by man, that our piety to God is most severely tried, or most successfully cultivated. No ! it is in the dark hour of adversity, when disappointment, disease, affliction has bowed our soul to the dust, and made life a burthen, when all the pleasures we valued have been torn from us, and all the hopes we most fondly cherished have been blighted—it is in this dreary season that the religion of the heart is watered by the dews of Heaven, and increases and abounds—“ Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.” We should therefore abstract our thoughts from earth, and habituate our mind to the contemplation of Heaven, and of those joys that are treasured there for the people of God—joys which “ eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.” By the eye of faith we should ever regard that peaceful haven whither we are approaching—life is a warfare, we should contend valiantly for the prize is a crown of glory—it is a journey, we should brave its dangers and endure its fatigue, for the end is a Canaan of eternal rest, it is a race which we should run with patience, “ looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith : who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Again, it is only by considering this life a state of probation that we can reconcile the apparent anomalies in the government of the world with our ideas of God’s justice and goodness—anomalies which to the atheist and the infidel are inexplicable, which to the Calvinistic christian must be equally so ; but to him who regards life as a stage of preparation for eternity, redound to the glory of God and the happiness of man. If, as our limited ideas of propriety would lead us to expect, virtue were universally attended with happiness and prosperity, and vice as universally followed by misery and misfortune, there would be no evil in the world ; for every motive would stimulate us to righteousness, and no temptation would exist to divert us from the path of rectitude. Happiness is “ our beging’s end and aim,” and while mankind are eagerly seeking for this pearl of



great price, many are led astray by ignorance; but more, far more, by disregard of the consequences of their actions. One consequence of every crime that is committed is, must from the very nature of things, be *pleasure*; when the drunkard raises the bowl to his lips and quaffs off the intoxicating draught, is not pleasure his object, the pleasure he derives from the dissipation of the cares that harrass, and the fears that haunt his soul? When the murderer unsheaths his steel and strikes his victim to the earth, is not pleasure his object, the pleasure which he expects from the plundered wealth, or that which he enjoys in the indulgence of his passion? Single out any one from the black catalogue of crimes that degrade our nature, and it will invariably be found that the pursuit of pleasure, of happiness, is the source to which it must be traced. It is on the same principle that men discharge all the moral duties, and perform all the religious exercises that constitute their moral and religious character. In every religion, whether proceeding from the spirit of truth, and aiming at the elevation of man from the debased condition in which he commonly draws out his life; or deriving its origin from the spurious source of human invention, and framed to promote the purposes of ambition, or indulge the promptings of superstition; we can behold some beneficial end proposed to its votaries, some hope of present or expected good, or some prospect of deliverance from danger apprehended, or misery endured. Without such invitation to compose a religion, the shrines of the heathen would be crowded by no deluded beings, prostrating their bodies and their minds to the imaginary power of earth-born divinities; nor would the sanctuaries of christian worship be frequented by the prodigal children of a benevolent God who are "hungering and thirsting after righteousness." Happiness then being the mainspring of all our actions, if misery alone were the invariable consequence of vice, and happiness alone the invariable consequence of virtue, all men would be virtuous, and life would become a state not of probation, but of retribution. We know however that virtue and happiness, vice and misery are not thus intimately connected in the world, and it is only by regarding the present state as one of probation, and fixing our affections on that weight of glory that

remains for the good in a future world, that we can reconcile the moral government of the earth with the righteousness of God.

This also is the view of human life that is perpetually presented to us in the ministry of our blessed Lord, who exhorts us to repent, to be ready, to work while it is called to-day, and to lay up for ourselves treasures in Heaven." The apostles catching the spirit of their master, beseech us to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling;" and declare that "God is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."

Life then, as a state of probation, exhibits the economy of a merciful and benevolent God, whose delight is the happiness of his creatures—it reconciles the apparent inconsistencies in the government of the world, which have so often generated atheism and infidelity, and is clearly and perfectly accordant with the whole tenor of Scripture—with the faith, life, death, and ascension of our Lord; and with the repeated exhortations and admonitions both of himself and his apostles. It also affords us a stay in the hour of tribulation and sorrow—when every tie that bound us to earth has been burst—when the world frowns on us and friends forsake us—when the unbeliever and the frantic rise up against us and persecute us for *righteousness*' sake: we can endure all the ills that oppress us, and despise all the perils that threaten us—persuaded that the end will be everlasting life. The veil which covered Heaven and eternity from our eyes, has been "rent in twain" by the blessed gospel; Christ has ascended up on high, leading "captivity captive;" and while he has left us an example that we should follow his steps, he has held out to us a sure hope that we too shall ascend to that region of bliss whither he has preceded us, "where we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on us, nor any heat; for the lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and shall lead us unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes."

But, supported as this doctrine is by reason, and abundantly as it has been confirmed by Revelation, there are some, and those not a few, who regard it as unscriptural and dangerous; who, although they be-

lieve in a future state of rewards and punishments, maintain that the present life has no connection with our happiness or misery hereafter, that God has appointed some to everlasting life, and others to everlasting death, and that the fortunate or unfortunate subjects of his eternal decree, have neither lot nor part in the matter. Let us hear the opinion of these religionists as expressed by themselves. "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death. These angels and men thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished." And again—"Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them, they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others; yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith; nor are done in a right manner according to the word; nor to a right end, the glory of God; they are therefore sinful and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God, and yet their neglect of them, is more sinful and displeasing unto God." Christian reader, thus speaks the Westminster Confession of Faith, the oracle of popular orthodoxy, which was published nearly *two hundred* years ago, as a second edition of doctrinal christianity, (*with considerable additions and corrections*)—thus speaks the volume, which the saintly divines of the Synod of Ulster in our own enlightened age, not a whit behind their venerable ancestors of Westminster in their zeal against rational religion and true philosophy, are now mustering their strength to set up as the standard of Presbyterian faith and the criterion of *vital* religion. It is a striking characteristic of the human mind, when overclouded with ignorance and superstition, that it venerates every thing that is wonderful, inconsistent, and hard to be understood. Hence all the absurdities in the mythology and science of the heathens—but alas! the blaze of knowledge that is now illuminating the nations, has still left a vestige of this unhallowed reverence unconsumed. There are still to be found men, ready to bow down and worship mystery, and reject every simple view that squares with their own judgment, and is adapted to their own capacity.

I believe that in a very few observations the erroneousness of the doctrine of Predestination might be fully shown. God has made two revelations of himself to mankind, one in his works, the other in his word; the former being the foundation of natural, the latter of revealed religion. These two revelations cannot be opposed to each other, in as much as they are both derived from the same Author, in whom dwell all truth and wisdom; but, if they are found to disagree, one of them must be spurious and ought to be rejected. So far even the worthies of Westminster would concur with me. If we reject either, we must reject that of the Bible, for we cannot resist the evidence of our senses, and the knowledge immediately and necessarily derived from it. It is by this argument that orthodox Presbyterians combat the doctrine of transubstantiation—it is on the evidence of the senses they base their opposition to it; and they cannot therefore object when we resort to the same argument in examining any doctrine, or reporting any error whatsoever. Now that we have ideas of morality independently of the knowledge which we obtain from the Holy Scriptures, few will deny. I am aware indeed that a learned doctor of this town, of politico-religious notoriety, not two weeks ago, declared that “*there is no morality but that which is derived from the Bible!*” but then he was in the heat of an animated harangue on “*the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible!*” and could not have given utterance to the preposterous sentiment in the sober hour of calm reflection. No morality independently of the Bible! Why it is from the very fact that the morality of the Bible accords with our natural ideas of morality that the strongest, the primary evidence for the authenticity of the Scriptures is derived. If we had no moral feelings implanted in our breast, the word of God must have been as freely received and obeyed by us if it had inculcated the injury of benefactors, the murder of parents, and the worship of the Devil; but will any man contend that such a system of morality purporting to come from Heaven—I care not by what *external* evidence it be supported—would be generally received? A few families, indeed, might swear obedience to its precepts, but the mass of mankind would reject it as unworthy of the Great Being whose image is

reflected in the volume of nature. Having ideas of morality, then, by nature, we must have ideas of justice, for these form an integral part of morality; and we feel that it is diametrically opposed to our natural ideas of justice, that God should, from all eternity, for his own glory decree that some men should be created *for the purpose* of enjoying all the blessings of eternal life, and others of being cast into the bottomless pit, where "the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." It follows therefore, that our feelings of justice are false, or this doctrine is erroneous; but our feelings of justice are not false, for they are universal, and necessarily arise from the construction of our nature; therefore, the consequence is unavoidable, this doctrine is erroneous. If predestination were clearly revealed in the Scriptures, which I verily believe it is not, I would rather make shipwreck of christianity and cast my Bible to the winds, than yield one jot, or one tittle of all the morality I am taught by nature. It is impossible that we can strip the Deity of one of his most glorious attributes, and banish every feeling of justice from our heart, at pleasure; we might as well conceive that, at the bidding of some divine teacher, or the command of some divine messenger, we could look upon the sun as darkness, and the gay verdure of smiling spring as the sable robe of mourning nature. Calvinists may profess to believe that virtue has no merit in the eyes of Heaven, but to believe it is contrary to the nature of things; and we accordingly find that in the discharge of their moral duties, they are sedulous and active; I trust they may ever continue to be so, and ceasing to talk in empty and unmeaning sounds of "saint" and "elect," may study to show forth their faith by their works.

It may be objected by some that I have exalted human reason above God's word. I have not done so, I have made the one the handmaid, the interpreter of the other; it was by separating them that the enormities and absurdities of christianity in past ages were generated, and I pray to God that the crucible of reason may never cease to be applied to our holy religion until all the dross which for so many hundred years gathered over it, and dimmed its lustre, be totally and completely removed.

EUGENIUS.



ON PUBLIC WORSHIP.

---

As it is very desirable to remove any impediment that may exist to the success of that great cause in which we feel ourselves deeply interested, because we conceive it to be the cause of God and of truth: I will take advantage of your pages, in order to direct the attention of your readers to a very serious obstacle in the way of our success, and a great stumbling block to weak brethren.

The impediment that I allude to, is, that we too often allow ourselves to be evil spoken of, as persons regardless of the worship of God, as those that owe an homage which we do not pay to the Sovereign Ruler and Disposer of all things—to Him by whose bounty it is that we have a single moment of being to spend upon any thing—that we make large deductions, if we do not totally alienate ourselves, from the little time that is set apart to testify in one another's presence, and to one another's sympathizing feelings, that we are children of one Father, whom we are endeavouring to love, with all our heart and soul and mind. Now let us consider the effect of this. Let us imagine ourselves in a strange country, inquiring into the state of Religion, and finding that there were two distinct classes, both professing that they owe devout homage to an Almighty Being—and that one was often so negligent as to deprive the service of those who did not attend of that sympathy which invariably results from the concurrence of others in the same act of worship; and that the other party thronged in greater numbers, and devoted a larger portion of time to this admitted duty; in whose favour would your prepossessions be?—and how materially might this neglect operate in preventing others from joining what they would otherwise admit to be more agreeable to their better judgment? There may, no doubt, be much error in this mode of deciding such a question; but there will always be a tendency in the human mind, to estimate the sincerity of attachment existing in any sect, by the regularity with which they come together to testify their sympathy and manifest their zeal. So that if it were only for the influence that such regularity would have in removing a stumb-

ling block out of the way of others, and preventing the way of truth from being misrepresented, we should give a steady undeviating attendance to the public worship of our God.

Now do we think this a hard measure—do we consider it an unreasonable demand? That we should set apart unalienably in testimony of thankfulness to the Author of all good; not one 50th part of that time which in his unspeakable bounty, he leaves at our own disposal, but for which he considers will hold us responsible—is surely no hardship. That the children of God, should on one day in the week come together from their different dwellings, in which they have experienced an uninterrupted continuance of his good Providence, and meet with one another under one roof, to pay a very short—a most insufficient homage; but still, one that might most reasonably be expected from them—to admit that whether high or low, rich or poor, they have experienced vastly greater blessings than they ever deserved—to profess their contended submission to the destinations of Providence—to sympathize with one another in their feelings of penitence—to encourage one another in the principles of obedience—to feed the flame of each other's devotion, by adding fuel upon fuel, until all ascend as one acceptable sacrifice—to hear reverently our Father's gracious message through his well-beloved Son—to acknowledge the authority which that Son has received from his Father—and to pay our tribute of gratitude to him who became our brother by being partaker of all our infirmities—and who with unspeakable affection towards us, passed through the severe trials and sufferings recorded of him most patiently and perseveringly, even to the very end—for our good—for the acquisition of privileges, of authority, of power, which he never required for himself, but of which we should on very easy conditions, reap the fruits throughout an eternity of blessedness—that a little profit—a little pleasure—a little folding together of the hands in mere indolence—a little newspaper reading should be given up, while we manifest a communion of devout and grateful feeling, for all this can never be looked upon as an unreasonable requirement.

The benefit that we should derive from this change, might be most aptly compared to the difference between

a disjointed figure and a compact, vigorous, and active frame. It would give us unity and consequently strength—not one name, but one spirit—one zeal—one sympathy in one another's dearest interests. It would more strongly impress others with the conviction that we are in earnest, and every one knows how much this contributes to the inquiry why are we so much in earnest about it? But I have not scope to go into an amplified statement of all the advantages that would result.

V. D. M.

Cork, November 19th, 1851.

## SUNDAY-SCHOOL READINGS.

### NO. IV.

Genesis, chapter i. verse 26.—*And God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and over the flying creatures of the air, and over the cuttle, and over the wild beasts, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."*

"Let us make man," or we will make man: this plural form of the pronoun does not imply a plurality of persons; indeed the best Bible Critics, even among the Orthodox, admit the that phrase does not necessarily indicate plurality. Such a sense would be inconsistent with the construction of the English language. A man never addresses his associated life, mind, and body, plurally; consequently if God were 'three persons in one God,' he could not, with propriety of language, according to our ideas, address himself and themselves in one, plurally. This would be tritheism or polytheism added to the unity of God, which Trinitarians themselves *say* they reject. To disprove this Gentile polytheism, as far as this text may be thought to support it, we can show from Scripture that the plural form is employed where the sense is unquestionably singular: see Job, xviii. 2.—"How long will it be ere *ye* make and end of words." The plural pronoun *ye* is here applied to Job; and 1st Kings, xii. 9. Rehoboam says, "What counsel give *ye*, that *we* may answer this people who have spo-

ken to *me*." Here is, in the person of Rehoboam, a plurality and individuality, similar to that which in the text before us provides Trinitarians with a Trinity in Unity in the Godhead. In 2d Chronicles, c. x. v. 6, 9, we find the usage of both the singular and plural pronoun employed in the recitation of the above event. The letter of Artaxerxes king of Persia which is preserved in the book of Ezra, chap. iv. 18, begins thus:—"The letter which ye sent unto *us* hath been plainly read before *me*—" here is another instance of plural singular, or multitude in unity, in Artaxerxes. If, indeed, support for Trinity—the favourite hypothesis of the Churches of Rome, England, and Scotland, is to be sought from the dialogue form of this verse of Scripture, it is abundantly wonderful that Deity should discuss with himself the making of man; that Trinity in Unity should state to the Son, that "they" not one of the Gods, but all of them, "would make man;" yet we are told by the same theorists, that it was the Son who made everything. It requires little reflection for an unprejudiced mind to perceive the utter confusion of such arguments. The plural pronoun is retained as an indication of eminence in our own and other modern languages. The king writes "*we*," and subscribes from "*our court*;" yet the king, when spoken of, is never called "the kings themselves," but "the king himself." In a similar manner the singular pronoun is applied to the Almighty in innumerable places in Scripture, while the plural appellative to God's name occurs probably not above three times in the Bible. To show that the eastern languages, by their construction, account for many Orthodox mistakes, we may refer to the Koran. Every one knows that the disciples of Mahomet reject the doctrine of the Trinity with abhorrence; looking on it as a Polytheism which disfigures Christianity. The insuperable obstacle in the way of their conformity to Christianity, is, that they have been made to believe, that the Trinity is a part of it. Yet we find here the plural phraseology used to give eminence and dignity to the name of God. "*We did*," "*we commanded*," "*we gave*," occur constantly in the writings of Mahomet, in delivering *his* version of God's commands. Adhering to the English version of the Bible, (as we mean to do,) it would not be wise to enter on the wide field of facili-

ties which the knowledge of learned men in the original languages of the Bible, might afford ; but those who wish to follow up this inquiry, will find, in the Vindication of Unitarianism, by James Yates, A.M., a very valuable discussion of the question ; it is also simply and clearly handled in a cheap pamphlet by Richard Wright, called, “ An Examination of the supposed Scripture proof of the Trinity.”

“ *In our image according to our likeness.*”

Does any Trinitarian believe that man is a Trinity of persons in one person. No doubt they have wrought hard to establish a case of resemblance in mind, body, and soul, assumed by theorists to be distinct portions of the individual man ; but is mind alone a perfect man ? Is soul or life a perfect man ? Is body separately a perfect man ? If not, I take it that the analogy does not exist, and the illustration is defective. The most considerate Trinitarians renounce this fanciful illustration of their views, and believe the likeness of man to God to consist in his intellectuality ; yet the more verbal believer has the test in his favour, for it is said that God made man in “ *our*,” not “ *my*” likeness ; if there be a true plurality, positively man is said to be made like that plurality. But to those who believe more Scripturally all this confusion vanishes : of the personality of God man can have no idea, no man hath seen the person of God at any time, though his mind and will have been freely revealed to us, and this is the likeness of God of which we are qualified to judge.

“ *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he them, he created them male and female.*” “ *Created man,*” that is, mankind : not one sex, but the parents of the race. The general declaration of the creation of the progenitors of man is given here, the more particular details occur in chap. ii. verses 3 to 23. “ *Image of God ;*” man was created intellectual and sinless : we find that this glorious imagery of God may still be attained to ; part of it is ours always, our intellectuality, and we are still born sinless ; but even after having sinned we may recover our dignity, at least so St. Paul tells us in Ephes. chap. iv. 24, where we are commanded to “ *put on the new man which after (or resembling) God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.*” In this sense of resemblance our Saviour is said



to be the "*express image of God.*" That is he who represented or imaged forth God's mind to man. And again in Coloss. i. 15., we have the words, "*Christ, who is the image of the invisible God;*" Christ was the declarer or exhibiter of God's communicable mercies, not any personal image of Deity; for we know, that though our Saviour was commissioned more fully to reveal the Father, yet no man hath seen God at any time; we are, indeed, in this very verse Colos. i. 15. told, that God is invisible. Scripture instructs us what it is to be after the image or likeness of God. It is the renewing of virtue founded on knowledge within us. See Colos. iii. 9, 10. "*Seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him.*" The representation of Almighty mind in a bodily form, is the common and general vice of barbarous and unenlightened men; into it the Jews continually were lapsing, although the commandment not to make "*any likeness of any thing in heaven above,*" seems to indicate not only the creatures of God, but also their Creator, as forbidden to be represented for worship. Indeed we are distinctly told in Dent. chap. iv. verse 14. that the commandments are to be understood in this way, and in verse 15, that God made no personal representation lest he should be worshipped in that form. "*For ye saw no manner of similitude on the day the Lord spake to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire lest ye corrupt yourselves.*" But how little enlightened is man to this day when we find many persons worshipping the Divine Messenger of God, who, under a more spiritual dispensation, showed forth the mind of the Creator. We do not find any Scripture authority for the deification of God's last messenger, and without such authority to believe in it would be Christian idolatry. After our examination of the words, "*image of God,*" let us consider whether we have satisfied ourselves that the imagery meant is intellectuality and purity; and also let us more at large and at leisure, examine, whether our Saviour and his Apostles do not state, (in opposition to modern Orthodoxy,) that we may renew in us that image which nothing but personal vice can soil or deface. Verse 28. "*And God blessed them; and said to them, be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have*

*dominion over the fishes of the sea ; and over the flying creatures of the air ; and over the cattle ; and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*" "God blessed them," that is, pronounced them happy ; or commanded their happiness. With God the declaration produced the effect, and the means of that happiness is immediately detailed. The word "blessed," or made happy, will be explained and well remembered, by knowing that the old English word for blessed, was "*blissed*," or gifted with bliss. Some phrases become by vain repetition, like liturgies, a mere jingle of words without accompanying ideas. The hackneyed "God bless you" of conversation has, with many, scarcely a thought given to its meaning. We should, as far as possible, read with the eye and with the understanding also. "*Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth :*"—Temporal blessings seem to be the only gifts here conferred upon mankind ; and among the very first is naturally a numerous progeny. We all instinctively, as well as from reason, desire to perpetuate ourselves in our posterity, and society must be in an unnatural and perverted state when children and relatives cease to be a blessing. Man certainly has, at times, lessened the best blessings of God, and in no instance has that wickeness been made more apparent, than when criminal wars have entailed expenses upon nations, and consequently made the support of a family burdensome. Among the early Hebrews a numerous family of children was a joyous theme, and fitted for a poet, priest, and king, to celebrate ; see Psalm cxxvii. verses 3, 4, 5. "*Lo children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward : as arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are children of the youth : happy is the man who hath his quiver full of these, he shall speak with the enemies in the gate.*" Read also that most beautiful description of blessedness, founded on virtuous domestic relations, which is the subject of 128th Psalm.

"*And subdue it :*" we find here that exertion was part of the original blessing of mankind. The subjugation of the earth was not considered a task even to the inhabitants of Eden : and to this day happy is the man who knowing the unworthiness of idleness, feels miserable when it is imposed on him ; and whose energy shows that it is indeed a blessing to be occupied.

"*And have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and over*

*the flying creatures of the air, and over the cattle, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."*

Some fanciful writers suppose, that God at this time by making man in his own image, cast an awful glory about him, which no animal can resist without being subdued before it; when however it was remarked that though the smaller animals showed fear, yet the beasts of prey did not; this difficulty was explained by saying that if man was pure, he would have this power. This mode of justifying one assumption by another, will not do where facts can be examined. Some of the few men who have attained most wonderful power over fierce animals in our times, have not been remarkable for their purity of manners, or resemblance to Adam in his innocent state; indeed intrepidity and skill, seem to be the necessary requisites for this article. Most animals fear one another, and man is often a source of alarm while a stranger to the animal who encounters him, as are generally all new or strange moving bodies. The dominion of man arises from his powers being of a higher kind than those of the beings he controuls; and these powers are the gift of God. The moral question however remains for consideration; how is a man to exercise this gift of dominion? We are told in Job c. xxv. 2, that while "*dominion and fear are with God, he maketh peace in high places.*" And should man's dominion be a tyranny, or should it not be used for the most exalted or at least useful purposes. There is constant proof in Scripture that the power of Omnipotence himself, is only known in the energy of goodness, see Psalm civ. v. 10, 11, 12, 18, 21, 27, "*He sendeth the springs into the vallies, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. By Him shall the fowls of heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the conies. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. These all wait upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.*" Such is the dominion of Omnipotence over the cattle of a thousand hills, and over every living thing which is his. On this subject I would call your particular attention to Dr. Drummond's published sermon, entitled, "*Humanity to Animals the Christian's duty.*" In it among numerous

arguments for, and incitements to mercy to animals, it is proved, "*that a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast,*" Prov. 12, 10. And "*That the merciful man doeth good to his own soul, but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh,*" Prov. 11, 17. We have various general charges to be merciful in Scripture, and our Saviour pronounces his blessing, and gives a promise of mercy on such a disposition and conduct. The man who needlessly inflicts pain or takes away life is cruel. Surely the idle angler who puts a worm on a hook alive, and catches a trifling fish, and calls it sport, is cruel. He who catches fish for necessary food exercises the lawful dominion which man has been given over the fishes of the sea. He that shoots birds for amusement, which even some clergy the teachers of the people, continue to do, is not without offence. If indeed we had, as the American settlers have, the wild Turkey in our woods, the fowler who should shoot for his family's dinner, and not for the "diversion of death," would be justified: that is his dominion over the fowls of the air. Let us remember that God careth for even one sparrow; though with men it is almost without value or price. To kill cattle for food we believe to be lawful, but the hunting of the deer reared for the chase, is but sporting with the sufferings of our fellow creatures; and let us remember that the Creator himself commanded a day of rest to be given to the cattle. It would take up too much time to expose the folly and wickedness of rearing foxes, and hares, for the purpose of having them hunted or torn to death, by fierce dogs and more savage men: of the brutality of horse racing, over-drawing coach horses, &c. The destruction of the tiger is necessary in the Indies as that of the wolf was once at home; nay, every animal required by man's lawful and reasonable security, must fall for that security; but that man who wantonly or even heedlessly puts an end to the existence of a creature, takes away a source of happiness which God thought worth bestowing—transgresses the just bounds of the dominion given unto him, and commits injustice before God, though it be merely against the creeping thing that moveth upon the earth. I am, &c.

A LEARNING TEACHER.



[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—A little work has lately issued from the Press, and from the pen of the Rev. Daniel Bagot, one of the Episcopal Protestant ministers of Newry, purporting to be a defence of the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity, and to contain a reply to some discourses touching that subject, which I was induced to publish about four years ago. Every attempt has been made, tho' I believe with very little effect, to get this work into circulation. It has been duly advertised in all possible ways, and *puffed* into notice with laudable zeal and *accuracy* by several of the Periodical publications. Among others, the "Dublin Christian Examiner," the Magazine of the Established Church, in its last No. (Feb. 1832) introduces Mr. Bagot's book to public notice in the most flattering terms, as a work of unusual merit, and a triumphant refutation of the system of a certain Dissenting Minister in Newry, who had "lately avowed the withering doctrines of Socinianism." Whoever discharges the office of reviewer for that Periodical, must be confessed to hold the pen of a ready writer, and to be well qualified for his situation. It appears that he requires not even to look at the Title-page, or open the cover of any book, in order to give the public a full and accurate view of its contents. In this case at least, it is certain that he cannot have read a single page in either of the works to which his veracious notice extends. In the first page of Mr. Bagot's preface he would have found the following paragraph:—"To the first three sermons of Mr. Mitchell, he has little objection to offer. He then stands upon an elevation *high above Socinianism*, and from the 'vantage ground of scripture refutes the errors of that destructive system, as ably and successfully as any Trinitarian could desire." When such gross and wilful misstatements, as those of the *Christian Examiner* are unblushingly put forth, in a work which should have some concern for its character, what may not be expected from other *Orthodox* publications, which have been so often characterised by the same headlong and unprincipled zeal?

When Mr. Bagot's book fell into my hands, I could not but conclude that, to any discriminating reader,



capable of comparing it with itself and with scripture, it would be found to contain sufficient for its own refutation. To the writer will be cheerfully conceded a considerable share of ingenuity and shrewdness in the arrangement of his materials, and in the management of his argument. It is readily admitted, too, that he has generally preserved a tone of comparative moderation, and in a great measure declined the use of opprobrious names, and those other vulgar methods of prejudicing the question, which have so often been employed by theologians of his class, but which serve no other end than to discover the unchristian spirit and temper of those who employ them. But, whilst he has shown himself ashamed to wield these as the weapons of his warfare, he certainly has, and with an unsparring hand, employed others equally unworthy of the cause of truth. His book, if I do not much mistake, will be perceived by the discerning reader to be full of gratuitous assumption, uncouth collation of scripture, much special pleading, and false inference. And if you will occasionally allow me a portion of your valuable room, I undertake to make good this assertion; and to convince any mind of common intelligence and honesty, and competent acquaintance with the Bible, that Mr. Bagot's defence of the Trinity, presents the same mass of incoherence and confusion, of inconsistency and self-contradiction, which has characterized every work in defence of the same doctrine, from the days of Athanasius down to the present hour.

Whilst I say this, I unaffectedly confess that I have no confidence in myself, as possessing any peculiar talent for theological controversy:—but I have great confidence in the simple exhibition of the scripture doctrine, and the force of scripture truth. And tho' I have experienced some difficulty in overcoming a natural reluctance at appearing in the character of a Polemic; yet this feeling has been subdued by a sense of the great importance of the question at issue, and by the humble hope, that my plain statement of what appears to me to be the teaching of Divine revelation may, under the blessing of God, prove of some service to the cause of christian truth.

In the course of my strictures on Mr. Bagot's work, I must be expected to touch occasionally upon some of

the same topics which have been introduced more or less into those discourses to which he has appealed. But I hope, now to be able to retouch them with somewhat more vigour and decision; and to furnish many additional and solid grounds in Scripture, for those views of God, and of Christ, which Unitarians entertain. To many, I am aware, this is an unnecessary labour: to others it is not so. And now, that a spirit of inquiry has been awakened upon this subject, let us hope that, with the Divine blessing, every attempt to turn public attention upon the sacred contents of the Bible may contribute, in however small a proportion, to disseminate the "truth as it is in Jesus," and to free from the rubbish and corruptions of men, "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God."

I shall do nothing more at present, than to specify the course which I deign to pursue in my subsequent communications upon this subject. In the first place, I mean to offer a few strictures upon the general statements contained in Mr. Bagot's book, wherein I expect to show, to the satisfaction of the public, that the positions which he maintains are often totally at variance with each other, and with the creeds and articles to which he has given his solemn assent and consent, as well as with the plain declarations of Scripture. And when I shall have dismissed this portion of the subject, I design, God willing, to furnish a correct and compressed view of the Scripture doctrine of the unity of God, as distinguished from his trinity; wherein I shall have occasion to examine such of Mr. Bagot's Scripture references as may appear to require it: for, in truth, most of them seem to me to have little bearing upon the subject—many of them to prove the very reverse of what he intends. Meantime, I remain, Mr. Editor, faithfully yours,

J. MITCHEL.

---

#### POSTSCRIPT TO THE FIRST ARTICLE.

---

It might be thought unfair did I not advert to a different statement of Dr. Chalmers's opinion on the Geological objections to the statement of Moses, that has

been given in the public papers. I have not immediate access to either work quoted; but I wish to observe that Dr. Chalmers's opinion is not referred to by me for the support that it gives to my views of geology; but simply to prove, that a person may be a sincere believer in Revelation—an eminent preacher of its truths, and supporter of its authority, without thinking it necessary to maintain the literality of the account in Genesis. And there is no one, I believe, who will venture to say, that at the time of his writing the article on Christianity, for the Edinburgh Encyclopedia, Dr. C. was not a firm believer in divine Revelation.

Allow me to add the authority of Dr. Whately, the present Archbishop of Dublin, taken from his *Essays on the Difficulties in the writings of St. Paul*.

“As we must not dare to with-hold or disguise a *Religious* truth, we must dread the progress of no other truth. We must not imitate the bigotted Papists who imprisoned Galileo; and step forward, Bible in hand, (like the profane Israelites carrying the ark of God into the field of battle,) to check the inquiries of the Geologist, the Astronomer, or the Political Economist, from an apprehension that the cause of religion can be endangered by them. Any theory on whatever subject that is really sound can never be inimical to a religion that is founded on truth: and any that is unsound may be refuted by arguments drawn from observation and experiment, without calling in the aid of Revelation. If we give way to a dread of danger from the inculcation of any Scriptural doctrine, or from the progress of physical or moral Science, we manifest a want of faith in God's power, or in his will to maintain his own cause. That we shall, indeed, best further his cause, by fearless perseveranœ in an open and straight course, I am firmly persuaded; but it is not only when we *perceive* the mischiefs of falsehood and disguise, and the beneficial tendency of fairness and candour, that we are to be followers of truth: the trial of our faith is when we *cannot* perceive this, and the part of a lover of truth is to follow her at all seeming hazards, after the example of Him who came into the world that he might bear witness to the Truth.”

## INTELLIGENCE.

WE have been induced to give a fuller and more correct account of what passed at Mr. Porter's Installation dinner than what has appeared; because we understand that many of those present, would wish to have a record of what was said, at an entertainment from which they derived so much rational pleasure, and that others would like to see the sentiments more correctly given. We are sorry to understand, that in one case, the speech as formerly reported, led to a total misapprehension of the speaker's sentiments; and that Mr. Bruce has been understood by a very respectable young man, to be throwing a stigma upon him, because his friends have been very injudiciously leading him to suppose, that he was at one time in the contemplation of the congregation, and therefore was the person alluded to. It was evident, indeed, to all present, that there was no allusion to any one whatever; and his own conscience might have secured him against imagining himself to be characterized as artful, designing, or double minded. We have received a note from Mr. Bruce, requesting us to disabuse the mind of any one that may have so totally misconceived the tenor of his words. We regret that we cannot give any analysis of the admirable sermon by Mr. Heron, and charge by Dr. Ledlie, but we had no notes to guide us; and we fear from the unity and dependency of all the parts in both these excellent compositions, we should be doing them vast injustice by any report.

EDITORS.

“The REV. J. SCOTT, PORTER, (formerly of Carter-Lane, London,) having lately received a unanimous call from the First Presbyterian Congregation of Belfast, as assistant and successor to Dr. Bruce, who had retired from age and infirmity, and colleague to the Rev. Wm. Bruce, was installed in the pastoral office, in their Meeting-House, on Thursday, 2d Feb. There was a full attendance of the Ministers of the Presbytery of Antrim, (to which the First Congregation is attached,) and of the Remonstrant Synod. The house was, also, crowded with a highly respectable lay auditory; embracing several members of other Protestant persuasions, and of the Roman Catholic Church.

"The Rev. Mr. CARLEY, of Antrim, introduced the service by prayer, and reading of the Scriptures. The Rev. W. HERON, of Ballyclare, delivered an able, eloquent, and instructive discourse, from Proverbs, 29, c. 25 v.—'The fear of Man bringeth a snare; but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.' The Rev. Dr. LEDLIE, in the name of the Presbytery, inquired whether the Congregation adhered to their invitation to the Rev. J. SCOTT PORTER, to become their Pastor? To which JOHN HOLMES HOUSTON, Esq. on behalf of the Congregation, replied in the affirmative. Mr. J. SCOTT PORTER, having been asked whether he adhered to his acceptance of the call, also replied in the affirmative; and briefly alluded to his views in accepting the pastoral office. Dr. LEDLIE then delivered an able Charge to the Minister and to the Congregation."

#### INSTALLATION DINNER.

"THE REV. J. SCOTT PORTER, the Ministers of the Presbytery of Antrim, several of the Ministers of the Remonstrant Synod, and a few guests, (among whom was the Right Rev. Dr. Crolly,) were afterwards entertained at Dinner, in the Commercial Buildings, by the Congregation. About 155 gentlemen, (Presbyterians, Protestants, and Catholics,) sat down to an elegant entertainment. The Chair was occupied by SAMUEL S. THOMPSON, Esq. M. D., who very ably discharged the duties of President; and JOHN HOLMES HOUSTON, Esq., acted as Vice-President. At the head of the two side tables, were WILLIAM TENNENT and ROBERT CALLWELL, Esqrs. On the right of the Chair, sat the Rev. J. S. PORTER, and on its left the Right Rev. Dr. CROLLY, Roman Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor. Next to these gentlemen, (respectively,) were Major ROWAN, and J. P. BLACKISTON, Esq. both members of the Church of England. This association of the most enlightened and influential members of different Churches, seemed to be hailed with delight, by one of the most respectable assemblies we have ever witnessed. After the usual preliminary toasts, the Chairman rose and said—

"Gentlemen, it has been long an established custom among Presbyterian Congregations, on the appointment of a new Minister, for the lay members of the Congregation to meet together for the entertainment of their Minister, and his clerical brethren who had assisted in the religious ceremonies of the day, as well as in celebration of an event of much importance to their well-being as a religious community. Such, gentlemen, is the purpose of our meeting this day; and, truly, when I look around me and see the numerous and highly respectable company here assembled—when I consider the rank and station of the Gentlemen composing it, their intelligence and independence, and the important situations



in life which they occupy—when I observe that Christians of all denominations have met here this day as brethren—I must say the custom is a goodly one, and that we, the Members of the First Presbyterian Congregation, have reason to indulge in some honest pride on the occasion.—Gentlemen, shortly after the retirement of our venerable senior Minister, the Members of the Congregation began to turn their thoughts to the appointment of a suitable person to fill the vacancy thus occasioned. Just at this time, Mr. Porter, accidentally as far as regarded him, came to Belfast, on his way to visit his friends in Ireland. He preached one Sunday in the Meeting-house of the Second Congregation, where many of our Members had an opportunity of hearing him, and such was the impression made on them, that, on their representation, an invitation was given to him to preach for one Sunday in our house. With this request Mr. Porter complied—and the Congregation subsequently, after due deliberation and inquiry, forwarded an unanimous call to him to become their Minister. This invitation, frankly and cordially given, was with equal frankness accepted—and the compact thus entered into has this day been ratified, in the presence of the parties, by the Reverend Presbytery of Antrim, to which our Congregation belongs.—Gentlemen, I shall not attempt to enter into an elaborate eulogium on the character, the virtues, or the talents of our newly appointed Minister—I feel it a task above my powers, and the attempt would, I think, be offensive to good taste in his presence. But, Gentlemen, I have said that he was *unanimously chosen* by the Congregation—were I to talk for an hour, what could I say that would convey half so much? May then his days be long among us, and may his Ministry be eminently blessed in usefulness to the people, and in comfort and happiness to himself.—I give you ‘The health of the Rev. John Scott Porter.’”

“*The health of the Rev. J. Scott Porter,—may he long live amongst us, and may his services prove equally happy to himself and useful to others.*”

“The Rev. J. SCOTT PORTER, in returning thanks, said, that the extremely kind and gratifying reception with which he had met, though far beyond any thing he had deserved, was not more than he had expected; for he knew that, in returning to join his old friends in this place, he would be received with the affection of friendship and the cordiality of the Irish character. To the Chairman he felt deeply indebted for the kindness which had prompted his remarks; which it would be his desire and duty to endeavour to deserve. To the members of the Congregation, he felt grateful, not only for the present expression of their regard, but for the partiality which had induced them to turn their attention to him, at a time when he certainly had not expected any such application. Passing through this town, on a visit to his friends, a visit long meditated, frequently promised, and as often delayed, by circumstances into which he felt it unnecessary to enter, he was informed of a desire felt by some members of the First Congregation, to hear him preach, with a view to his becoming their junior Minister; and knowing the feelings of his family on the subject, he had not thought himself at liberty to decline an opening which had eventually

led to his settlement in the neighbourhood of those, whom, by the ties of nature he was bound to love. At the same time, he hoped he might say, that the First Congregation had much better means of becoming acquainted with his personal and ministerial character, than was afforded by his preaching to them on probation, on one or two occasions. The six years which he had spent as pastor of Carter-lane Society, in London, were his real trial; and, by the result of an inquiry into his labours there, he was not afraid or unwilling to be judged. He esteemed it a high honour to be called to succeed the venerable Minister, whose retirement had occasioned this vacancy; and was gratified by his admission into the Presbytery of Antrim; a body which has long been the bulwark of religious liberty and of the true principles of Protestantism in the North of Ireland. To these principles he was warmly attached, when he left this country; and his associations, since, had confirmed that attachment. It was his happiness, soon after his arrival in London, to be thrown into the society of gentlemen of every profession, and more especially his clerical brethren, who not only loved the cause of religious liberty with enlightened zeal, but had, on several occasions, come forward as its advocates, and greatly contributed, by their exertions, to extend its triumphs. He might particularly allude to the part which they had taken in procuring the repeal of the English Test and Corporation Acts. In that short and successful struggle, he had borne an humble but a very ardent part; and one circumstance which had occurred during its progress, had still farther extended his views on this subject. The Dissenters of England, approaching the Legislature to pray for the recognition of rights long withheld from them, naturally looked anxiously to the line of conduct which their brethren of other denominations might pursue, on that occasion; and many stepped forward on their behalf, who, though not connected with them in religious sentiment, showed themselves disposed to be one with them in heart; and in this number, to their immortal honour be it recorded, were many conscientious members of the Church of England, who came forward with petitions to Parliament, to grant the claims of the Dissenters. Petitions, also, came forward in great numbers from Ireland in their favour; but from whom did these petitions proceed? Not from the Antrim Presbytery, liberal and enlightened as it is; not from the Synod of Munster, which is also a liberal and enlightened body; much less from the Synod of Ulster, which was otherwise occupied at the time; but from the Irish Catholics, with whom the English Dissenters had the fewest religious sympathies; and from whom they were supposed to differ most widely in theological sentiments! Having then early imbibed the principles of religious freedom, these principles having been strengthened by his connexions, experience and observation since having practically witnessed the possibility of persons of different denominations, acting towards each other in the spirit of the purest charity, yet without the least sacrifice or compromise of principle on either side, it would be his duty to act upon these principles, at all times. To his mind, the widest limit of religious liberty always appeared the best; and if any person could point out a bound-

dary more comprehensive than his own, that boundary he would adopt. With respect to his other ministerial duties, he could not do better than to imitate the example of his predecessors in the pulpit which he now occupied as pastor. He had, in England, preached to a Congregation, in which he had been preceded by Richard Baxter and Edmund Calamy, who were, certainly, among the most illustrious men of their age. In the first Congregation in Belfast, he treaded in the steps of men no less distinguished here, than Baxter and Calamy were in England; he might allude to those illustrious men, Halliday, Michael Bruce, and Drennan, in former times; not to speak of those, to whom, because they were living and because they were present, he could not more particularly refer. With these examples before him, he would say, that if he failed egregiously in his office, the fault must be his own; for no man had higher motives, domestic and public, to engage him to the performance of his duty. Mr. Porter, concluded, by returning thanks for the indulgence with which he had been heard, and wishing health and happiness to every individual present.

After the conclusion of Mr. Porter's address, the Chairman again rose and said—

“Gentlemen—In rising to propose the first of a series of toasts which I have on my list, comprising the principal religious bodies into which our society is divided, I feel it may not be unfitting to premise a few words in regard to the feelings and principles that actuate us on this occasion. We do not, Gentlemen, propose these toasts in mere compliance with common custom, which could not well be dispensed with, still less do we propose them in a latitudinarian spirit, that would affect to regard with philosophic indifference all religious distinctions in doctrine or discipline. In the exercise of what we claim as an indefeasible right, the right of private judgment in matters of religion, we have arrived at certain conclusions on some disputed points, in which we differ from very many of our Christian brethren; but having come to these conclusions, on what we take to be solid scriptural grounds, it is equally our duty and our determination firmly and steadily to adhere to them. But, Gentlemen, we earnestly desire to maintain the truth, at least what we believe to be truth, *in love*, not in the spirit of strife, contention and uncharitableness. The same liberty which we claim for ourselves, we freely concede to all others, and we profess unfeignedly to respect their conscientious convictions. We come not here, however, to discuss knotty points in theology. We meet not on debateable ground. No—we are assembled, if I may so speak, on the neutral ground of our common Christianity—and sure I am it is wide enough to contain us all, nay, all Christians, of all denominations, would they be but content to think so, without the necessity of rudely crossing and jostling each other. While there are, no doubt, many points on which they conscientiously differ, there are many more in which all Christians agree, and it is most consolatory to think, that in the whole moral code of the New Testament, there is not one precept which affords a handle for contention or dispute.—From the beginning to the end of this sacred

volume, Christian charity, mutual forbearance, and brotherly love, are uniformly inculcated, and with these feelings we desire to regard all our Christian brethren of the various sects here assembled. We hoped to have had the honour of seeing at our table, as our guests this day, different Clergymen, as representatives of the various persuasions. In this hope, it is matter of much regret to us that we have been disappointed. We have endeavoured to do what we felt our duty; and our feelings towards them or their people cannot be altered by this disappointment. Not being enabled to attach to the toast I am about to give the health of any Clergyman present, I rejoice to have it in my power to add that of a highly respected layman, who, among several other gentlemen of the same communion, has done us the honour to join in this entertainment—I beg to propose the health of

*“Major Rowan; and our Brethren of the Established Church.”*

MAJOR ROWAN returned thanks as a member of the Established Church, and also on the part of the person whose representative he was, on this occasion. Whilst he was a sincere friend of the Established Church, and one of its most conscientious members, yet he rejoiced to think, that it allowed him to concede to others, that freedom of conscience, which he so firmly claimed to himself.—

*“The Marquis of Donegall; our respected and resident Landlord.”*

“The Chairman observed on announcing the next toast, that the feelings of their congregation, and he believed he might say generally of the Gentlemen comprising the company, toward their Roman Catholic brethren, and were too well known to require any observations from him, to induce them to receive the toast favorably; it was matter of much satisfaction to him, to be able to prefix to it, the health of the Right Rev. Prelate, who had this day honoured them with his company—that gentleman was so long and so well known among them all, that it would be more than superfluous for him to pronounce any eulogiums on his character and conduct—he hoped he might be permitted, to avail himself of that opportunity, of acknowledging the kind consideration, he (the Chairman) had at all times experienced at his hands, during the many years that he had been in the habit of meeting in the various duties of life, both public and private, and he trusted his Right Rev. friend would accept his cordial thanks for the same”—

*“The health of the Right Rev. Dr. Crolly; and our Brethren of the Roman Catholic Church.”*

“DR. CROLLY returned his most sincere thanks, for this honour, so flatteringly conferred on his flock in general, and on himself in particular. When he reflected, that he had before him the most respectable portion of the citizens of Belfast, he felt that it was more than an ordinary compliment. He said, that he had resided among the people of this town for a period of twenty years: during which time he had freely and largely mingled in their society, and met them in the management of their public institutions; and now, that he should deserve this kind notice at their hands, was to him a source of the purest delight and gratitude.—This pleasure was also heightened by the introduction he had received to their guest, the



Rev. Mr. Porter. He (Dr. Crolly) had been an ardent admirer of the spirited, and manly, and upright conduct of his highly-esteemed father. When the Roman Catholics of Ireland had to contend against the weightiest oppressions—oppressions of the body and of the soul—William Porter was always foremost in the ranks, to protect the oppressed, to raise up the fallen, to stem the torrent of bigotry, and throw the shield of his advocacy over the miseries and misfortunes of the injured and degraded Irish Catholic. When we see (said Dr. Crolly) his son prepared to follow in the same course, ready to extend the hand of charity and love to all his brethren of mankind,—ought we not to feel the greatest satisfaction in his coming among us? My Church, (continued the Rev. Prelate,) commands me to love in my heart every man who has been received by his Saviour; and to do my utmost to spread the works of charity love and mercy. With these feelings, in my endeavours to extinguish the unhapy flame of party discord in my native country, I have always found the First Presbyterian Congregation most ready to co-operate with me in every thing for the good of society. (*Dr. Crolly and Mr. J. Scott Porter, shook hands, amidst the loudest cheers.*)

*"The Town and Trade of Belfast."*

*"Sir Stephen May, our much respected Sovereign."*

The Chairman hoped to have the pleasure of seeing the Rev. Dr. Hanna as their guest that day, as he had kindly accepted their invitation; he regretted, however, to find by a note which he held in his hand, that he had been obliged to leave town on indispensable business. Considering him, however, as virtually present under these circumstances, and believing he was so in heart and feeling, he begged to propose with every feeling of respect—

*"The Rev. Dr. Hanna; and the General Synod of Ulster."*

*"The Royal Belfast Academical Institution."*

The Rev. HENRY MONTGOMERY, having been loudly called for, spoke at length, with his usual force and eloquence, in advocacy of the worth and increasing prosperity of that rising national seminary. He concluded, by referring to the Rev. J. Scott Porter having been one of his earliest scholars, and of the praiseworthy and honourable manner in which Mr. Porter had conducted himself whilst there, not only by his attention in the classes, but by his amiable conduct as a resident in his (Mr. M.'s) family.

*"The Marchioness of Donegall."*

*"Our Brethren of the General Synod of Ireland, distinguished by the name "Seceders."*

The Chairman introduced the next toast in very complimentary terms. It ought (said he) to have been drunk before; but the Committee were anxious to put among the foremost sentiments, our brethren of other religious denominations."

*"The Health of our venerable retired Pastor Dr. Bruce."* (*The company simultaneously rose, and expressed their sense of respect, by loud cheering.*)

Dr. BRUCE said, that, in rising to offer his best thanks for the honor just conferred on him, he felt inclined to extend his acknowledgments to the numerous favours he had received, during his long ministry among the people he now had the happiness to see



around him. It would be better, however, to confine himself to a few words. When he was about to resign his charge, he was well aware of the names of many men, eminent for learning, piety, and talent, which would present themselves to the notice of his people. He, however, abstained from giving his opinion respecting any of them. But, when the Congregation resolved to invite Mr. Scott Porter to become his successor, he at once recognized the wisdom of their choice. He considered Mr. Porter peculiarly fitted for that situation which he now holds. From his (Dr. B.'s,) early acquaintance with him, he was well aware, that, in his successor, he should also find a friend. Mr. Porter's friendship with his son, and their mutual good understanding regarding the important duties they had to discharge, also satisfied him (Dr. B.,) that Mr. Porter would prove an affectionate and confidential colleague. Dr. Bruce went on to congratulate the Congregation on their choice, and on Mr. Porter's unanimous settlement among them. It was, he said, another proof of the unanimity, good will, and brotherly love, that had prevailed among them for upwards of a century. He concluded by passing a warm eulogium on Dr. Thomson, and proposing

*The health of the Chairman*

Dr. THOMSON returned thanks.

*National Education.*

*Our Brethren of the Synod of Munster.*

The Rév. HENRY MONTGOMERY rose, and observed, that when the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster had separated itself from the General Synod, and when they had not arrived at a final and successful conclusion of their affairs; the Synod of Munster most generously offered to receive the Congregations separating themselves from the Synod, in whatever manner they chose to dictate; and had held forth their offerings of support and friendship in a way which never can, or never will, be forgotten. However, there was a gentleman present, Mr. William Porter, a member of the Munster Synod, who was better able than he to speak of the merits of that highly respectable body.

Mr. W. PORTER rose and said, that when our distinguished countryman, Edmund Burke, was first a candidate for the representation of Bristol, he addressed the electors in a most effective speech, which is still looked upon as a very favourable specimen of his copious style of oratory. His colleague, upon that occasion, a man of business it would seem, and more familiar, probably, with the phraseology of the counting-house, than with any other, when it came to his turn, to deliver his sentiments, merely observed: 'Gentlemen, I say *ditto* to Mr. Burke, I say *ditto* to Mr. Burke.' He (Mr. Porter,) thought this well-known anecdote applicable to the situation in which he himself was placed. The company had already heard so many excellent addresses, that he, (Mr. Porter,) returning thanks on behalf of a religious body, constituted upon the comprehensive principles which had been so justly eulogised, might well content himself with telling the meeting, 'You have heard the gentlemen who preceded me; I say *ditto* to them all.' Mr. Porter went on to say, that the Chairman, in introducing the

toast, had mentioned the names of Armstrong and Drummond.—He (Mr. P.) although labouring under some bodily indisposition, felt himself compelled to say something of the men, under whose ministry he had for many years been privileged to sit. The Belfast people knew Mr. Armstrong—his plain practical breadth of common sense, and his effective exertions on behalf of all who struggled for the rights of conscience: they knew Dr. Drummond—one of the most superior men he had ever known; whose mind was enriched with the spoils of every science; whose fancy, instead of leading him astray, served only to throw light upon his deeper speculations; whose mind was animated by an inextinguishable love of truth, and in whose breast the milk of human kindness never could be soured. Mr. Porter then, in speaking of the Synod of Munster at large, claimed for it an honour to which he believed no other religious body in Ireland was entitled. The Synod of Ulster could not tolerate conscientious difference in opinion; a hundred years ago, they had driven out the Presbytery of Antrim; in our own day they had driven out the Remonstrants. For both the Seceding bodies, he, (Mr. Porter,) felt unfeigned respect, and he believed them perfectly incapable of exhibiting towards others any of that illiberality from which they themselves had suffered. But, they had, unfortunately, no means of carrying their principles into operation, as the members of both were of one mind, upon such points as are usually thought important. But, with the Synod of Munster, the case was otherwise. There the Unitarian majority extended to Calvinism the right hand of fellowship: they merely demanded, from their members, a belief in the Divine Origin of Christianity: and thinking that the great Head of the Church had instituted no other terms of communion, they felt that those who were good enough for their master, were good enough for them.”

*“The Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, and their Moderator, the Rev. Fletcher Blakely.”*

“Rev. F. BLAKELY rose and said, he had to request that the meeting would accept his best thanks for the honour they had done him, in drinking his health; an honour which was much heightened, by coupling his name with the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster—a new Church with old principles. He said he would rather be the Moderator of that Synod, in which every member thinks as he pleases, and may speak what he thinks, than be the Dictator of the most numerous assembly in the world. By the protection of a patriot King, and by the kindness of a liberal administration, they have, under the Providence of the King of kings, been enabled to establish a city of refuge, into which men, whether Unitarian or Trinitarian, may fly for safety and succour. This observation would, he trusted, satisfy the queries of his friend, Counsellor Porter, who appealed to him, in his eloquent address, when speaking of that learned body, the Synod of Munster. The principles of the two Synods, (the Munster and Remonstrant,) were similar in all respects. It will not be denied by honest minds, that the difficulties of the Remonstrants have been many and various; but he (Mr. Blakely,) trusted and believed, that gratitude to their friends, and grace to their foes, are sentiments which are deeply

inscribed on all their hearts. It has been said, that the Remonstrant Synod is a rope of sand, without any bond of union. *The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible*, is, indeed, the only rule of Faith and Practice which the Remonstrants adhere to; and if this be no bond of union, how can Christians be united, or what will bind them? *The right of private judgment*, in the interpretation of the Bible, is another principle which belongs to the Remonstrants; and if their opponents will first grant it, but afterwards call in question the exercise of it, he (Mr. Blakely,) would reply to them, as Mr. Parr had replied to the Presbytery of Exeter, in 1719, the very year in which the storms began in the General Synod of Ulster, and which, afterwards, ended in the expulsion of the Presbytery of Antrim. When Mr. Parr was called on to take the Test, his answer was to this effect:—‘There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all;’—and he wished he could add—‘and in you all.’ There is a third principle, which is a bond of union among the Remonstrants, and that is *Christian Charity*; a principle which they wish to cultivate with every man, of every colour, of every creed, and of every country. In this they wish to emulate all, to be equalled by many, but excelled by none. Mr. Blakely, having got permission to give a toast, said he would propose the health of a gentleman present, who was distinguished as a good man, an upright magistrate, and a kind landlord. He was a favourite with the liberal members of all churches, and was a true and consistent Protestant Dissenter:

*John Holmes Houston, Esq. of Orangefield."*

"Mr. Houston returned thanks, and proposed

*The Ladies of the First Presbyterian Congregation."*

*"The Moderator of the Presbytery of Antrim."*

"The Rev. Wm. HERON returned thanks in an eloquent manner. He said he had, like Mr. Potter, been nurtured in a Presbytery of liberality; and, on being annexed to the Presbytery of Antrim, he seemed only to be proceeding in his career to a sister colony. After some very forcible observations, he proposed, as a toast,

*The Rev. William Bruce, and the First Presbyterian Congregation."*

"The Rev. WILLIAM BRUCE, before replying to the last toast which had been given, would advert to one which had been a short time previously announced from the chair—the health of the Ladies of the Congregation; and he felt no hesitation in declaring, that women more pious, charitable, and truly liberal, more distinguished for intelligence and for zeal, on behalf of truth and righteousness were no where to be found, and he was sure that his colleague would find in them the most lively zeal for the interest of our cause, and the utmost readiness in forwarding every useful plan. He confessed that he liked such meetings as the present on these occasions. He thought them profitable—he thought it a useful and profitable thing to bring so many together, to exchange kindly feelings, and encourage Christian liberality, and he did not value that mawkish sanctity that would object to them. With respect to himself, he thanked the gentlemen present for the affection with which they had received his health, in conjunction with the First Congregation. He

was almost ashamed to say that he had been for nearly twenty years their minister, as he felt that he had done so very little in the time: but he had the feeling that his deficiencies were more than compensated for by the exertions of one of whom he could not speak as he ought, and therefore would say nothing. He would tell his friend and colleague, however, that it would require their joint labour and exertions adequately to maintain a cause which his father had mainly contributed to establish and to spread. The chairman would bear testimony that he (Mr. B.) had absolutely resolved in no way to interfere with respect to the choice of a colleague, and that to this resolution he had faithfully adhered. He could now most cordially congratulate them on their selection. There could have been but one circumstance that would have tempted him to depart from the resolution he had formed. If the Congregation had been in any danger of being deceived by some insincere, double minded man, he must then have informed them of their danger, as it was impossible that he could have acted in that relation with one of such a character.—One or other must sooner or later have given up as co-operation there could not have been. In proportion to his dislike to duplicity, was his satisfaction in knowing the candour, the open-mindedness of Mr. Porter, in addition to his other highly valuable qualifications: on these he much depended for their future usefulness, and he promised to his colleague his best assistance and co-operation in any plans he might wish to pursue. Mr. Bruce concluded by proposing, in a very cordial manner,

*The health of the Rev. John Porter, and our brethern of the Second Presbyterian Congregation."*

"The Rev. JOHN PORTER rose in compliance with the call of the meeting, to acknowledge the compliment paid to the Second Congregation. He said, he was aware, that many of its members, then present, were better qualified than himself to do justice to the sentiment; but, in one particular, he had an advantage over these gentlemen—that being their minister, he was able to say some things of them, which their own feelings of delicacy might suppress. The public records of the town bear testimony to their liberality. In their sectarian enemies, they have ever recognized their Christian brethren. To all, when in need, have their purse-strings been opened; to all have their services been cheerfully rendered; and to all has the warm stream of their sympathies flowed. Even the enemies of their creed will admit, that however erroneous may be their faith, their practice has been right. He could truly say, that the welfare of the First Congregation was to his people a subject of the liveliest interest. The number of that Society then present for the purpose of welcoming the arrival of the young Minister to his native shores, of extending to him the rites of hospitality, and the hand of friendship, were a sufficient proof of this assertion. Looking back to the First Congregation, as the Parent Hive, out of whose overflowing members their own was first embodied, it would have been unnatural did they not desire its welfare. And, even if they should, in the ordinary days of the week, forget that claim upon their sympathy, the Sabbath morning, as it called them to the house of prayer, would have reminded them of their sworn



brotherhood, when they looked up and beheld their two temples rearing their venerable walls within the same enclosure, unseparated even by a fence. When the hand of an irresistible, but all-wise and benevolent Providence, deprived the first Congregation of the services of its venerable pastor, who is the pride and the ornament of the Presbyterian name; it was the prayer of the Second Congregation, that, in his successor, a worthy representative might be found; and that the mantle of the Prophet might descend on proper shoulders. Their prayer, they believe, has been heard, and their hope ratified. His own long and intimate acquaintance enabled him to say much of the person in question; but he forebore, lest it might be said, that he was actuated by the claims of consanguinity. Hitherto, it had been his happiness to have lived in the bonds of unity with the Ministers of the First Congregation. Hereafter, it would be his endeavour to preserve that unity unbroken. He rejoiced at the inviolability of the sacred principles they upheld; but rejoiced more at the contemplation of a more tolerant spirit, which, in despite of *interested* men, was beginning to display itself among all classes of the community."

*Mr. Blackiston proposed the health of the Stewards.*

*The health of the Lay Gentlemen, members of other communions, who have joined us this day in the present entertainment.*

Mr. PIRRIE returned thanks.

*Civil and Religious Liberty.*

The Chairman prefaced the next toast with some complimentary remarks.

*The Rev William Porter.*

Rev. W. PORTER begged leave to return thanks for the honour conferred on him. He was sensible, that it had been paid, not so much on his own personal account, as on account of his connexion with the individual who had that morning been appointed one of their ministers; but where was the man possessing the *feelings* of a father, who would not concur with him in thinking, that the compliment, instead of being lessened by that circumstance, was enhanced a thousand fold? To have a son chosen, and unanimously chosen, as Pastor of the First Belfast Congregation, a society so eminently distinguished for the moral, intellectual, and social respectability of its members, was a thing which could not but be gratifying to the parental pride of any person—to him it was gratifying in the extreme. He confessed that he stood there before them a proud man—he must be destitute of natural affection, were he to *feel* otherwise; and would be guilty of gross affectation were he to say otherwise. It was his earnest prayer, that the object of their choice might be enabled, by Divine assistance, to conduct himself in such a manner, as to justify their partiality, and prove himself not altogether unworthy of being the successor of the M'Brides and Hallidays, and the colleague of the Bruces.—Mr. Porter concluded by observing, that of his son's professional capabilities it did not become him to speak; but this he would say, and say with confidence, that if that young man should fulfil the duties of a Pastor as faithfully and affectionately, as he had uniformly fulfilled the duties of a son, they never would have reason to repent of their choice.



*Mr. William Porter, and the Irish Bar.*

Mr. W. PORTER returned thanks.

The Chairman, after a few prefatory remarks, proposed,

*Prosperity to the Congregation of Carter-Lane, London*

The REV. J. SCOTT PORTER acknowledged the compliment thus paid to his former flock; to whose religious, moral, and social character, he paid a warm and affectionate tribute.

#### OBITUARY.

Died, on the 9th February, Mr. John Galt Smith, in the 62d year of his age, after a long and severe illness, attended with much pain and suffering, that were borne with patience and resignation.

On the 14th of February, Mrs. Catherine Montgomery, in the 73d year of her age.

#### CORRESPONDENTS.

Erasmus on Female Piety, Q. on the New Plan of Education, and other articles have been received.

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

---

No. III.

APRIL, 1832.

VOL. III.

---

FEMALE PIETY.

WHETHER we consider the virtue and happiness of individuals, the welfare of civil society, or the advancement of good morals and pure religion,—the dignity, virtues, and duties of the Female character, are subjects which excite the most lively interest, and demand the most profound consideration: for though these important objects depend immediately on the talents and virtues of men, the character of mankind is primarily determined by the instruction of the Women. To them all men are subject during that period of life in which they are most susceptible of lasting impressions, and from them we receive our first ideas of Religion, Truth, Honour, and Letters; and the principles and conduct of the Mother are of much greater consequence to a family, than those of the Husband. A vicious and ignorant Mother will rear a vicious and ignorant offspring, notwithstanding the utmost attention of their Father; while a virtuous and enlightened wife will be able to counteract, in a great degree, the depravity and brutality of her husband, as far as their children are concerned, and even effect a reformation in his own character. An amiable woman may implant such virtues, as no bad example shall ever be able to eradicate; and a depraved one may inspire her children with such a perverse and abandoned spirit as it will be impossible to reform. Nor is their influence confined to our early years. A wise and respectable parent will retain her authority long after her children are parents, and through them transmit the efficacy of her instructions and example to the third and fourth generations. The glory of some of the most eminent men of antiquity, is justly ascribed to the wisdom and care of those illustrious matrons, to whom they owed their birth. As with those noble personages of ancient history, so, in

modern times, the ruling principles of their sex should be Honour and Piety—the purest and most delicate principles of morals in their commerce with the world, with an implicit resignation and devotedness to the divine will, and reliance on Providence. In ancient times it was an unhappy and embarrassing circumstance that these principles of Purity and Piety were not always in perfect harmony. It is our peculiar felicity that they combine. In the sequel of this paper, therefore, I shall dwell on the beauty and importance of Female Piety.

The importance of this virtue will be best illustrated by considering its effects upon others; to discern its beauty we must look into the heart and life of the individual herself.

As the characters of individual men must be greatly influenced by the good sense and amiable qualities of the female relatives, from whom they receive the first rudiments of education, and the earliest moral bias; so must the national character be affected by the same cause: and if this be the case in other points, it must be peculiarly true with respect to those, in which women may be naturally expected to excel. Of this class is Piety; and surely the importance of this virtue, even in a political and national point of view, cannot be denied. The most pious and virtuous age will be most enamoured of its beauty; and the more impious and flagitious the world becomes, the more sensible do we become of its importance, and the more deeply do we lament its decay.

But this influence of women is not confined to children, nor even to youth; it is yet more beneficially exerted over their husbands: nor is it so clearly perceived, or beautifully exemplified in any public scene, as in the interior of a private family. It is the strongest, yet the gentlest, bond of conjugal, parental, and fraternal union. What a beautiful spectacle is a family, in which the parents take sweet counsel together; walk to the house of the Lord in company, and teach their children to fear God and dwell together in unity! Who shall separate whom God thus joins together?

In proportion to the union, confidence and prosperity, produced by Female Piety, are the disunion, distrust and discredit, attendant upon the opposite character.

When moral and religious education is neglected, and the ties of blood are not entwined with those of religion, they may soon be rent asunder: and when the passions,—the selfish, irascible and unsocial propensities of our nature burst the barrier of religion, that moderation of character on which domestic happiness and prosperity are built, will be swept away by the tide. But the most fatal consequence of this defect in the female character is, that no *confidence* can be reposed in a sceptical and irreligious woman. So naturally do we associate piety with the female character, that a woman of a sceptical and irreligious turn, is an odious and disgusting object. It harmonizes so well with the most amiable qualities of the female sex, that a woman who is even *suspected* of indifference to religion, will hardly gain credit for that delicacy of sentiment and principle on other subjects, which constitutes her peculiar ornament. One who avows her disbelief will be considered as little better than a profligate at heart: and from infidelity in religion to infidelity in the conjugal connexion, the transition is easy.

The *domestic occupations* of women also afford great encouragement and opportunity for the cultivation of religious principles and pious affections. The duty of instructing their children in the first principles of religion, is highly conducive to this end; as well as those daily observances for which women may easily allot a portion of their time, such as the perusal of Scripture, and books of devotion and practical piety.

Notwithstanding these encouragements to piety, we have reason to lament that this amiable feeling is less lively among the female sex than might be reasonably expected. This is partly owing to the habit of living too much abroad. Home is the residence of female excellence and felicity; and in proportion as women forsake home, they abandon the peculiar merit of their character, and the truest happiness of their lives. By promiscuous intercourse with the world, they always lose dignity and delicacy; they descend to the level of the masculine character, which is inelegant and vulgar, compared with the spotless purity and majestic grace for which they were designed by nature. Promiscuous reading has a similar tendency with indiscriminate conversation. It taints the purity and degrades the dignity

of the mind. Even on religious subjects reading should be select. Religious controversy, the canvassing of doctrines, and the bandying of arguments, blunt the spiritual feeling; suppress the benevolent affections, and kindle angry and uncharitable passions. A female controversialist may be more virtuous and respectable, but is not more amiable than a female sceptic; and without a greater fund of learning than they can be reasonably expected to possess, the sentiments of the two may not materially differ at last. The distinguishing characteristic of female religion should be sentimental, not dogmatical.

If my female readers should be inclined to ask, why I make a difference between a male and female sceptic, or infidel, one reason has been given already; a man is more liable to seduction of this kind, and therefore his falling into it does not imply equal depravity: and another has been hinted at; the woman has stronger and more frequent inducements to cultivate religious habits. But the chief reason why I suppose infidelity to have a worse effect on the morals of a woman than a man, is this:—when religion is set aside we have nothing to depend on but the point of honour. Now this is different in a man and a woman. The honour of a man consists in qualities that are exposed to public view, and that cannot be violated without certain infamy: that of a woman is of a more secret and retired nature, and may be sacrificed without notoriety or public reproach. Though, therefore, they be equally irreligious, there is more dependance to be placed in the honour of the one than the other, because his violation of it is more notorious, and immediately followed by disgrace and loss. With respect to those virtues and duties that may be violated in secret, there is as little room or ground for confidence in the male as in the female infidel. Besides the most important parts of the masculine character may be supported, in some degree, without a sense of religion, though in truth it is only a hollow show. He will practice integrity, friendship, natural affection, and public spirit, from instinctive feeling or respect for public opinion; because the demonstrations of these are obvious to public view, and attract notice and applause. But the most important points of female virtue are not defended by this safeguard. The



violation of them may escape the observation of their friends, and sometimes the watchful and malignant curiosity of the censorious.

The peculiar *beauty* of Female Piety consists in this, that the more delicate features of the feminine character can hardly exist without it: and its great *advantage* to the individual arises from its being a seasoning to her domestic comforts, and affording a refuge in every species of trouble.

The distinguishing excellence of the female character is, to be above suspicion, and to avoid every appearance of evil: and this will seldom be attained by any that are destitute of piety. Though religious people set less value on the opinion of the world than others, they are in less danger of incurring censure; because they are governed by a higher principle. If they can come up to their own ideas of virtue; if they can secure the approbation of their own hearts, and of God, who is greater than their hearts, and knoweth all things, they will rise far above the standard of public opinion, and become objects of general praise and admiration, rather than blame and contempt. Now it is only in the word of God, that this delicacy and refinement of moral principle can be learned, and only by the culture of piety that it can be reduced to practice. If we think of nothing higher than to shun reproach, we shall seldom attain even that object; because we shall steer so near to sin that we can hardly escape blame: or if we be so fortunate as to shun well-founded reproach, we shall at least be exposed to slander. But if we cultivate the pure and pious morality of the Gospel, we shall keep so far aloof from vice and indiscretion as to afford no mark for the finger of merited scorn, nor even for the shafts of calumny.

A woman, without piety, without a sense of her relation to God, without some sentiment that her connexion with her husband and children is of a sacred nature, will be content to avoid open scandal, or, at most, actual sin; and her standard of duty will be fixed so low, so much on a level with the practice of most of her neighbours, and so inferior to some of them, that she will hardly accomplish her end. If she should, her principle of conduct is so mean, that she cannot rise to any eminence in virtue; she cannot feel that tenderness, that pious solici-

tude for every member of her family, which constitutes the highest merit of an amiable and respectable matron; and if she relies upon any inferior qualities for reputation and comfort, she will find herself woefully disappointed. "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." One who confines her wishes to her own gratification, or expands them only to the attraction of public admiration, cannot be expected to regulate her house so as to promote the purest happiness, and most pious morals; and to keep her husband free from all uneasiness concerning every thing that she does, and indifferent to everything that is said of her. "*Her* husband, when he sitteth among his neighbours and heareth of her, shall sigh bitterly." But "the grace of a wife delighteth her husband, and her discretion will fatten his bones. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her." "A silent and loving wife is a gift of the Lord; and there is nothing so much worth as a mind well-instructed. A modest and faithful woman is a double grace, and her continent mind cannot be valued. As the sun, when it ariseth in the high heaven; so is the beauty of a good wife in the ordering of her house. As the clear light is on the holy candlestick, so is the beauty of her face even in ripe age." Eccles. xxvi.

Another advantage of piety is, that it affords a refuge in every trouble. It furnishes a fund of consolation under those injuries and mortifications to which women are subject, and of which they cannot complain.

The injuries and insults to which men are liable they may complain of, or resent. If a man be defamed, his point of honour, according to the maxims of the world, consists in requiring explanation, apology, or personal satisfaction, as it is called; and the laws of his country entitle him to redress and reparation. If he be insulted or wronged, he may vindicate his character or his rights according to the nature of the case, by honour or law. If the provocation arise in his own family, he may correct or fly from the cause of it. If the members of his family be refractory, he may repress their insolence by his authority, or desert his home and seek for more agreeable company. None of these expedients can, in most cases, be resorted to by a woman. Whether her injuries, mortifications and insults, arise from strangers or relatives, a woman in general can not, and a

prudent woman would not resent them, if she could. In most cases she would be equally dishonoured and disappointed, whether she had recourse to complaint or to resentment. This, indeed, is the most delicate and distressing circumstance that can occur in female life, and unfortunately it is one that frequently occurs. Here is the case in which the greatest dignity and wisdom may be displayed : here is the crisis in which all human prudence may be baffled. Young women are often exposed to the cruellest slights—the basest inconstancy and detraction, without the possibility of demanding redress ; of vindicating their honour, without, at the same time, aggravating their dishonour ; or of complaining, without swelling the vanity of the calumniator, and exposing themselves to a commiseration more cruel than contempt or injury. In a thousand cases of this kind, a young woman not only is unprotected, but cannot, without disgrace, apply for protection. Another source of mortification or distress arises from the severity or insensibility of parents and guardians. As the young are often indiscreet, and subject to passion, inexperienced in the world, and inattentive to those circumstances, which are desirable, and even necessary to comfort, in the present unnatural and artificial state of society, and especially in the conjugal relation ; so the old are too indifferent to the instincts of nature, too anxious for wealth ; and too forgetful of those sentiments, which are not only natural, but amiable in youth ; and without which indeed, young people are uninteresting and insipid. Hence arise those mortifying restraints and disappointments by which the happiness of the young is often unfeelingly sported with, and often irrecoverably lost.

The wrongs and mortifications of a *married woman*, often arise from her natural guardian, from the only person, to whom she could, in any case, resort for redress ; and the very person whom she would not punish were it in her power. She feels herself humbled even by the condolence of friends ; and slave as she is to a tyrant whom she loves, or with whose honour and interest her own are inseparably connected, she pines in silence, under incurable oppression. In other instances her afflictions arise from the death or the ingratitude, vices or crimes, of children. In all these, and in a multitude of other cases, to whom shall she flee for

refuge; to whom shall she utter her complaints; from whom shall she hope for redress? What consolation can she solicit, who would rather die than have her misery revealed? There is but one ear into which she can pour her complaints; one voice from which she can hope for comfort; one eye to which she can look for pity, and this is one to whom her voice is no stranger, and whose consolations are no stranger to her; for he is the God of comfort, consolation, and joy himself; the husband of the widow, and the father of the fatherless; the defender of those who are desolate and oppressed, and an everlasting recompense to those who love him. She can make known her sorrows to him without publishing them to the world; without the fear of contempt or scorn; and she has learned to submit to his will with implicit resignation, and kiss the chastening rod.

But piety is not only a sanctuary and city of refuge in times of calamity; it is the sweetest seasoning of domestic enjoyment. The pious matron feels a satisfactory consciousness that she has completed and fulfilled her duty. There is no vacuity in her heart, in which regret or remorse can harbour. She sees the good effect of her pious cares in every department and individual of her family. She anticipates the fruit of the good seed she has sown, in their future respectability and prosperity; and presumes to rely on a blessed and everlasting union with her partner and their offspring in the presence of that gracious God to whom she dedicated, and to whose wise providence she cheerfully resigns them. "Her children rise up and call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her," saying, "many daughters have done wisely; but thou excellest them all."

This is a character to which females should aspire from the earliest period of their lives. It will constitute their highest honour and their truest felicity. It is a character, however, which must be formed betimes; or it will be sought in vain when it shall be wanted. This is the law of nature; this is the law of God. Every valuable quality must be acquired early, and laid up in store against the time of need. Nor is there any room to complain of want of early instruction. For wisdom *now* crieth without: she uttereth her voice in the streets: she crieth in the chief places of concourse, in the opening of the gates.

ERASMUS.



## NATIONAL EDUCATION—PUBLIC MEETINGS, &amp;c.

A History of the rise and progress of cant; illustrated by facts, and those facts taken from the public conduct of *swingmen*; and still more particularly, from the public conduct of *popular Divines*, might, in proper hands, turn out a very edifying production. Materials for such a work are abundantly numerous at the present day, and may be found in almost every corner of our native land. The meetings that have lately taken place in opposition to the new system of Education, bear ample testimony to the power and influence of Cant; and its effects are visible in the distracted state of the community. From Belfast to Rathfriland—from the Peer to the Parson—"from ranting R-d-n, down to grovelling Wh-te"—from the grand pantomimic flourish of Bibles, down to the Eel of celebrated memory—through all the harangues, misrepresentations, calumnies, and falsehoods, by which *all* the meetings have been hitherto distinguished; the sanctified effrontory of the spiritual mountebanks, and the gullibility of the people, have been truly astonishing. We may talk of priestly power, and dictation over, and among the Roman Catholics, but we need not leave the *Presbyterian* Church for examples of this disposition. There is in my opinion, as strong a desire on the part of many self styled Orthodox ministers, to assume and exercise an authoritative power over the consciences of men—to check the progress of free enquiry—to suppress the right of private judgment, and to blindfold and keep in ignorance the laity, as exhibited by any Catholic priest in any country. The fact is, the laity like to be priest-ridden—and the more roughly they are ridden, the more do they reverence the rider. Of course they are, and will be gratified to the extent of their wishes; and were it possible, not only to stem, but to roll back the tide of knowledge, so far as many clergymen are concerned, the reflux would be rapid and fatal. At the meetings to which I have alluded, the great outcry and lamentation—the great sources of the beautiful, and sublime—of the vehement and the pathetic in oratory, were, to use the elegant phraseology of the Saints, the "burking of the bible," and the consequent spread of popery and infidelity. The whole



strength of Government is to be put forth for those purposes. The *Protestant* Bible is to be formally put down by proclamation, and a new one is to be made—nay, it has been announced from a certain pulpit in the neighbourhood of Belfast—that the new one *is already* made, laid up, cut and dry for the occasion; then when the fatal moment arrives, at “one fell swoop,” shall we be deprived of our scriptures. The spirit of John Knox has been howling through the North, like the Banshee on the death of an O’Nial—it has now quit the scene forever, and is hovering over the land of cakes, to guard that strong hold of orthodoxy—popery and infidelity divide the island, and christianity is no more. The Education Committee speak, and it is done—they open their mouths, and the thing is accomplished. Prelates and preachers once renowned for their stubborn presbyterian principles, have united with godless “neologists” and idolatrous Catholics to promote this consummation. The Pope is on a visit to the Archbishop of Dublin, and they are daily seen walking arm in arm through Sackville-Street, and about Kildare-Place. The Marquis of Anglesea cannot live without Doctor Doyle, and they are hourly in ominous communion. The Rev. James Carlisle has read his recantation, and been regularly inducted a ruling Elder in the Unitarian congregation, Strand-street. Dan O’Connell attempted the conversion of Earl Grey, but he stood by his “order,” and so fell into the hands of Lord Cloncurry, who has brought him over to “mother church;” but in short, unless the pious men who acquitted themselves so nobly in Belfast, with Lords Rodden and Dufferin, and that truth-telling M. P. Captain Gordon at their head, take the country into their holy keeping, the brush of desolation, and the besom of destruction, shall speedily pass over it, and sweep away every trace and vestige of christianity that yet remains.

To be serious—one would suppose that the facts and apprehensions really exist as above stated; and it is lamentable to think how many of the laity, and some of them not totally ignorant, prostrate their understandings, and suffer them to be trampled on and crushed, by the inflated jagernauts of the church. I had no idea at first, how much the influence of the several melo-dramatical, and farcical performances, that

have lately been presented to the public, on the subject of national Education, prevailed; but I have lately had opportunities of judging, and I was amazed to hear the gross misrepresentations, that, it was asserted, were delivered from the pulpits of Divines, whose new-born zeal for the "Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible," does them infinite credit. Honest, plain, and well-meaning people were actually afraid, in consequence of the inflammatory and lying harangues of their clergy, that men appointed by government, would enter their houses, rob them of their Bible, and in its place leave but a few shreds and patches of the sacred book. Such fabrications too, were put forth, and imposed on the people, by those very men who were most active in persecuting the Remonstrants, because *they* would receive nothing *but* the *Bible*, as the infallible source of *religious* instruction.

From my heart and soul I loathe and abominate the hypocritical cant of the clergy on such occasions, and pity and despise the ignorance and gullibility of the people; will no circumstances open their eyes to the total want of truth and honesty, so frequently manifested by our greatest pretenders to exclusive piety? Is the orthodoxy of such pretenders—is their eloquence (which though popular, is but spurious,) are their confident assertions, and their daring denunciations—are all these sufficient to draw a veil over their mental deformities, and to present them to the multitude as beings altogether lovely? This appears to be the case, and if a meeting commence and end with *prayer*, the interval may be filled up with the most malignant and calumnious declamations, and with the most ludicrous and disgusting narratives; and yet the holy zeal, and *Knox-like* intrepidity of the speakers, are applauded to the very echo. But I shall now leave those *new* champions of the Bible, the whole Bible, and *nothing but the Bible*, 'alone with their glory,' and turn for a moment to other matters.

It is asserted, and taken for granted, that the Catholic clergy have an insurmountable and universal objection to allow the children of their hearers to read the commonly received translation of the Scriptures; now on this subject 'I shall speak what I do know.' A friend of mine, who is still living, was for ten years the minister of a Presbyterian congregation, in a very Catholic district,

in the north of Ireland. He established *five* sunday-schools within the bounds of his congregation, and *eight* at least, out of *ten* of the scholars, were Catholics. The Priest of the parish had been educated at St. Omers, had travelled in Spain, was a man of learning, and sufficiently rigid in his religious principles. He taught a school on Sunday mornings, in his own chapel, and that chapel was but a short distance from where my friend lived, and where he had an evening school, in which were many Catholic children, and over which he himself more immediately presided. Our common translation of the Scriptures was constantly used there, by all the children who could read them, and I believe no other was introduced, because no other was ever proposed; and yet the Catholic Priest, so far from interfering to prevent the children of his hearers from attending, that when the business of his own school was over in the morning, he constantly exhorted them to repair to that of my friend, in the evening; and not only did he do this, but he has visited the school himself, and heard them read, in, what is called, by way of eminence, the Protestant Bible, without expressing any disapprobation. It is but fair to state, however, that he forbade the children to attend another Sunday-school, which was conducted under the auspices of the Rector and Curate of the parish—and why? Because little boarding-school misses—little learned ladies—divines in petticoats, of thirteen and fourteen years of age—undertook to *explain* the Scriptures, forsooth, to the ‘poor benighted papist creters.’

I have trespassed too far on your patience, and on your pages, but I must add a few lines more. Though the influence of *cant* is still powerful, yet I do believe it is on the decline. The march of mind has far outgone the anticipations of the ‘Exclusives,’ and a few years ago, little did they think, ‘good easy men,’ that their canting would soon pass for—its worth; that their hypocrisy, like water, would soon find its own level. The time is fast approaching when they shall be of little use to the *Lords* and *Magistrates* of the land, and when of course, they shall have few opportunities of inflaming an ignorant peasantry in the presence of a *noble chairman*. When that period shall have arrived, they will ‘hide their diminished heads’—the thick cloud of oblivion

will pass over them—‘ their remembrance will perish from the earth, and they shall have no name in the street’—then shall for ever

“ Their memory and their names be gone,  
Alike unknowing and unknown ;  
Their hatred and their pride be lost—  
Their envy buried in the dust ;  
For fixed the doom of such remains;  
And o’er them silence ever reigns.”

J. J. A.

---

## VINDICATION OF THE UNITY OF GOD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

BEFORE commencing a series of strictures on Mr. Bagot’s defence of the Athanasian Trinity, it may be proper to make a few preliminary observations.

It is evidently the leading design of the author of that work to represent our Lord Jesus Christ as the Supreme Deity :—and, in point of fact, he, and all who fully concur with him in that sentiment, are accustomed to worship and pray to the Son of God, as on a footing of equality with the Father.—So far as he is perfectly sincere therein, I can highly estimate his sincerity, even tho’ it be mistaken ; and hope I should be incapable of indulging in the slightest feeling of personal dislike to him on that account,—any more than I should towards the sincere and conscientious Romanist, who carries the same principle somewhat farther, and offers up his prayers to the Virgin Mary. I believe they are both in error. But whilst I pity and lament their mistakes of judgment, I cannot blame them for acting on their own convictions. I sincerely rejoice, indeed, in having good reason to believe that neither of these mistakes is so generally prevalent as may be thought : and that tho’ they may appear prominent in Creeds, and Articles, and public Prayers ; they are, nevertheless, among people of education and reflection, very little, if at all, recognised or acted on in their domestic and more private devotions. I am encouraged in this opinion with respect to the first of them, not merely by the candid confessions of numbers who believe them-

selves to be Trinitarians, but also by the distinct recollection of my own sentiments and conduct whilst I held, or thought I held, the same creed. When I came to see the unscriptural nature of that creed, the change was more in theory, than in practice : for, in truth, before that change, I was accustomed, just as I have since been, to offer up my prayers to God the Father, in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, the "one mediator between God and men." And tho' I dare not now address my prayers to Christ, as unto God ; yet, next to that undivided homage which I offer to the Supreme Father, stands the unfeigned veneration which I cherish towards his beloved Son, whom he hath "sent to be the Saviour of the world." I look upon him with gratitude and love as the visible representation of the invisible Deity, to whom the Father hath "given all power in heaven and earth." When he speaks, I hear the invisible God speaking by him ; when he acts, I behold the invisible God acting in him ; and I believe that the same God will at length "judge the world by him." I offer my humble thanks to heaven, that there is nothing, either in my life or ministry, that should throw discredit on these professions ; and I believe that Unitarians generally concur in the sentiments which I have here expressed, regarding the dignity and office of our Divine Saviour.

To what end, it may be asked, are these observations ? They are intended to repel the foul charge, by which Unitarian Christians have been so often calumniated, of a design "to degrade the Saviour of the world, and to rob him of the glory which is his due : " and let me hope that the following vindication of the peerless majesty of "the Father" cannot be suspected of any design to lower the dignity of his "beloved Son."

In any disquisition on such a theme, the perpetual reference to these Divine Persons, and the frequent repetition of these sacred names, may wear the appearance of an unconcerned and too familiar approach to the majesty of heaven ; but, as the subject cannot otherwise be treated of at all, it shall be my design and endeavour to handle it throughout with a becoming reverence. I do not, however, feel under any such obligation, in reference to the treatise before me ; and whilst my comments thereon cannot have any thing



personal towards the author, I shall nevertheless treat his conflicting and unscriptural statements with suitable freedom. I know that the current of popular prejudice is in his favour. But as this consideration has not previously prevented me, so neither will it now, nor, I trust, at any time, withhold me, from offering my humble testimony to what I believe to be the truth:—and hoping to be influenced throughout by the spirit of these observations, I here commence my purposed task.

In the first page of his work, Mr. Bagot fairly states the doctrine of the Trinity which he proposes to advocate. He tells us “that the scriptures reveal to us one Being as the supreme God;—that this Divine Being subsists in a plurality of persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that the essential attributes of the Supreme Deity are ascribed to these three Persons, in consequence of which we must believe the Supreme Deity of each.” I have read the scriptures with some attention, and yet am not able to discover a single passage in the entire volume of Divine revelation, which could possibly serve as the foundation of a belief, that God subsists in a “*plurality of persons* ;” and am sure neither Mr. Bagot nor any one else will ever be able to point it out. The word “*Person*” literally and truly means—one intelligent agent: and wherever in scripture this term is applied to the Deity, it is found to stand in the singular number. There are, as it appears to me, but two places in the whole scripture, one in the Old Testament, and one in the New, where this term is, according to our translation applied to God. The first is Job, xiii. 8, where, in reproving his pretended friends, he says—“will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? will ye accept *his Person*?” The second is Heb. 1 and 3, where the apostle, in speaking of the Son of God, represents him, in our English version, as the express image of his *person*.” (*χαρακτηρ της ὑποστασεως αυτου*, correctly rendered “the character of his *substance*.”) Here then it will be perceived God is evidently spoken of as *one person*: and if there be any passage of scripture wherein this term is applied to the Deity in the plural number, let it be produced. But is there any thing here which offers the slightest support to the idea, that God “subsists in a plurality of persons?” Is there not *that* in these

quotations from scripture, which necessarily shuts out the very conception of any such thing? In both, God is declared to be *one person*; by the Trinitarian doctrine he is asserted to be *three persons*. This doctrine, therefore, either flatly contradicts the scripture; or, if any one think it consistent with scripture, he must fasten upon scripture, the palpable absurdity, that three persons can subsist in one person.

Mr. Bagot professes to demonstrate the doctrine which he advocates, from scripture:—how is it that, in speaking on a subject of pure revelation, he thinks fit so frequently to express himself in terms which are no where applied to that subject in scripture? In reading his book, or any other in support of the same creed, one would be led to imagine, from the perpetual use of the terms—"Trinity"—"plurality of persons,"—"three distinct persons,"—the "equality of the Persons," &c. that the Bible must abound in phraseology of this nature: but what must be his astonishment to find, that within the covers of that holy book there is not so much as one solitary expression of the kind. The very terms are wholly unknown to scripture. Yet Mr. Bagot can gravely tell us, that "the scriptures reveal to us the Divine Being as subsisting in a *plurality of persons*!" But, seeing the scriptures, on the contrary, reveal God to us as *a person, one person*;—then it would follow of necessity, that if there were a *plurality of persons*, there must also be a *plurality of Gods*. For, however it may be attempted, *in words*, to combine the idea of *unity* with that of a *plurality of persons*, I maintain it to be formally impossible for the sincere believer in the "three Persons" to conceive of them as constituting but *one Being*, or to worship them *as one God*. And accordingly, whatever he may choose to say to the contrary, in point of fact Mr. Bagot worships them separately, as "God the Father," and "God the Son," and "God the Holy Ghost;" and then conjointly as the "holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God." Habit, I believe, often reconciles the mind to the greatest absurdities:—but to a person of any discrimination, and unaccustomed to such modes and forms of worship, they seem to cast the most embarrassing confusion over the very object of adoration. Three Divine Persons who are distinctly, and each by himself, to be acknow

ledged as the "Supreme Deity," and to be worshipped as such separately,—and then conjointly, as tho' they were but one God! What confusion is here, and how unlike any thing to be met with in Scripture! But Mr. Bagot, who asserts that we must believe "the Supreme Deity of each" of these three distinct persons, will possibly inform us, whether each "Supreme Deity" of his creed be equal to the whole? If so, then each must consist of "three persons," and so on, ad infinitum.—Or he will possibly tell us, whether the whole aggregate of "three persons" constituting the Trinity be not greater than any "one" of the same "three"? If so, then it follows of necessity that each person cannot be, what Mr. Bagot believes him to be, "the supreme Deity." But I must not seem to trifle even with his unscriptural and self-destroying view of a subject, in itself so sacred and awful. To me, the scriptures plainly reveal the Deity as one *person*: they never speak of Him as more than one: and therefore I cannot but conclude, that the doctrine of "three persons" in the Deity is not the doctrine of the christian scriptures; and that the worship founded on such doctrine, is not christian worship.

It is not long since the title "Unitarian" was regarded as a term of reproach: but it seems it is no longer so. Mr. Bagot observes, page 18,—“We are Unitarians as well as they. We assert, as explicitly, the unity of God; but at the same time, we believe that in this unity there is a distinction of persons. Now the legitimate way to answer our sentiments would be to adduce arguments to show that no such distinction of persons exists, instead of which we are met with proofs to demonstrate a proposition which we cordially hold, and in the very first instance concede that ‘there is but one God.’ Can the opponents of a Trinity show that the unity of God is decidedly inconsistent with some sort of plurality?” How can Mr. Bagot, bring himself to make a demand so absurd and unreasonable of the opponents of a Trinity? He *asserts* that there is a “plurality of persons,” or a “distinction of persons” in the unity of God; and he calls upon us to prove *that there is not*. He might just as reasonably call upon us to prove that one is not three, or that darkness is not light. Has he quite forgotten his logic? Does he not know that the proof of the affirmation, in the case

before us, rests with him? We say that *we cannot see* any where in the scripture a plain statement, such as he makes, setting forth that there is a plurality of persons in the Deity: let *him point it out* to us, and I hope we shall be ready to receive it with that reverence with which it becomes us to treat every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. In support of this plurality he refers, page 2, to several plural terminations and forms of expression to be met with in the Old testament. But he knows very well that this Hebrew idiom will be found, on examination, to prove much more than he desires. He cites Deut. vi.—4. “The Lord our Gods (*Elohim*) is one Lord.” It may be consistent with the trinitarian view to say that there are three Lords in one God: but I hope Mr. Bagot will not assert that there are *three Gods in one Lord*. He knows that the same term, in its plural form (*Elohim*) is applied in scripture to Moses and Dagon, and even to the Golden calf:—is he disposed to argue for a plurality of persons in each of these? He knows too, that, by the same idiom, the plural term, *Adonim*, Lords, is in like manner applied to Abraham, Pharaoh and others. And, therefore, he should be ashamed of producing upon any such ground, an argument, which has long since been repudiated by Calvin himself, and by many of the most learned defenders of the Trinity.

*We* are Unitarians, as distinguished from Trinitarians, because we believe, on the scripture authority, that God is *one person, not three persons*; because nothing has been, nor can be adduced from scripture to shake that belief; and because we have the express authority of our Lord Jesus Christ for believing in “the Father,” as he did, and worshipping “the Father,” after his example, as “*the only true God*.”—But, inasmuch as Mr. Bagot believes that the Father is *not* “*the only true God*,”—but that there are two other persons, distinct from him, who have equal claims with him to that high title,—he should not take the name “Unitarian;” but be content, at least until he adopt our views, with that of “Trinitarian,” or “Athanasian.” Our author has stated, page 31, “that the term ‘Father,’ is not always used as the *distinguishing title of the first person in the Godhead*, but is frequently applied to the Deity as the Creator and preserver of all things,



and in this sense is *an appropriate designation of Christ:*" referring for his authority to Col. 1—16 and 17, wherein it will be found that the term "*Father*" does not occur at all, as applied to any one. This need not surprise the reader of Mr. Bagot's work; for it will be found on examination, to be a very general practice with him, thus loosely to refer to irrelevant portions of scripture, especially when the words, as in this case, are not quoted, and even frequently when they are.

Now, what does Mr. Bagot mean by this statement? Does he hope to persuade any intelligent reader of scripture that the term "*Father*," as designating the Almighty, may be in any case, *indiscriminately* applied either to the first or second person of the Trinity? With such readers he must fail of accomplishing his object: for they are well aware that there is no such loose and indiscriminate application of the term, either by our Saviour himself, or by any of his inspired apostles. But perhaps he means only that *he himself* is in the habit of using the term "*Father*" as the indifferent designation of the first or of the second person; and there can be no good reason why, according to his own view, he should not also extend it to the third. But has he forgotten that, as a minister of the Established Church, he has sworn neither to "*confound the persons, nor divide the substance?*" both of which, I fear, have been frequently, though doubtless unintentionally done in the course of his treatise. But whatever may have been his meaning in the passage which has been quoted from page 31, he had so far forgotten it when he came to page 136, as there to lay down a doctrine diametrically opposite. For there he asserts of the three Persons, that "*all the titles, attributes, acts and homage of Supreme Deity are indifferently ascribed to them, with the exception of the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which designate this distinct personality.*" The term "*Father*" designates their distinct personality of the first person: and yet, according to Mr. Bagot, it is not always used as the *distinguishing title of the first Person!* How are these two assertions to be made consistent with each other? To me the latter appears, and I think must, on reflection, even to the author himself, to be equally contradictory to the former, and to scripture. Let him reconcile them, if he can. But



he should not calculate so largely on the stupidity of his readers, nor expect that such flat and glaring contradictions can pass without observation. He is by no means defective in talent: but no amount of talent will enable any man to free the Athanasian doctrine from self-contradiction. The defender of it must thus frequently utter the most conflicting sentiments. To such miserable shifts must every man resort, and in such a quagmire of absurdities must he be whelmed, who has undertaken to sustain a creed, which is equally inconsistent with reason and revelation, and with itself!

This however, as may be anticipated, is but one instance from among the many conflicting statements to be met with in the treatise before us. In page 79, the author tells us that, "as the three Persons constitute one Omnipotent Being, it is *perfectly indifferent to which any of the works of Godhead are ascribed.*" Whereas, by the same forgetfulness as before, when he comes to page 136, he tells us that the three Persons "*perform distinct offices, and consequently sustain distinct characters, which cannot be indifferently predicated of all.*" To the initiated there may be some method of reconciling these paradoxes; but according to my humble apprehension, the first of these declarations appears completely at variance with the second, and indeed with the truth of the case. And I think I shall show Mr. Bagot that it is equally repugnant even to those public statements to which he has given his solemn assent and consent. The 2d of the 39 articles declares for example, that "the son is begotten from everlasting of the Father." Is it *perfectly indifferent* to Mr. Bagot, to which person of the Trinity he ascribes this work of God? Does he mean to say, that the term "Father" is here as applicable to the *second*, as to the *first* Person? Does he deem it agreeable,—I will not say to scripture and reason, but to the express declarations of his avowed creed, to exchange the terms, and say—that the Father is *begotten* of the Son,—or that the Son is *begotten of himself*? This would be indeed a "*confounding of the persons,*" from which Mr. Bagot would shrink at once: but it would be nothing more than the legitimate consequence of his own principle. But the first of these declarations is plainly inconsistent, not only with the second, and with his avow-

ed creed, but likewise with the uniform language and bearing of Divine revelation. It will be agreed, I suppose, that our Saviour is speaking of the work of God, where it is recorded, Luke x. 21, that he "rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are *delivered unto me of my Father.*" Is it a matter of *perfect indifference* to which of the Persons these operations of Deity are ascribed? Shall we venture to suppose an exchange of persons here, and try how it will sound to represent the Father as addressing the Son in such terms as these,—"*I thank thee, O Son:*"—"all things are *delivered to me of my Son!*" The very attempt to make such a transposition sounds, almost like blasphemy, yet with Mr. Bagot, it is *perfectly indifferent* to which of the persons *any of the works of Godhead are ascribed!* Again, our Lord says, John v.—26, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself."—Now here is a work of Deity, which, by Mr. Bagot's rule, may be *indifferently ascribed* to any of the three Persons:—let us try—"As the Son hath life in himself, so hath he *given to the Father* to have life in himself!" How strange does this sound in the ear of any one accustomed to the teaching and phraseology of Scripture! Yet why should it, if Mr. Bagot's principle be correct, that it is *perfectly indifferent* to which of the Persons *any of the works of Godhead are ascribed?* Again, one of his inspired apostles says, (1 John, iv.—14). "We have seen and do testify that the *Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.*" Let this work of Deity, which upon Mr. Bagot's principle may be *indifferently ascribed* to any of the three Persons, be attributed to the second;—"We testify that the *Son sent the Father* to be the Saviour of the world:"—and we feel at once that an announcement has been made at variance with the entire scripture—yet "*it is perfectly indifferent, (with Mr. Bagot,) to which of the three Persons any of the works of the Godhead are ascribed!*" I need not pursue this test of Mr. Bagot's principle farther. Let any one open the New testament for himself, and apply it as I

have done here, to any passage in which the "Father" and the "Son" are spoken of, and he will find the result equally opposed to scripture, and revolting to the common feeling of christian minds. In truth, this principle would be found to cut much deeper than the propounder of it seems to be aware; and to prove much more than he proposes. If the doctrine of the Trinity could, upon trial as above, bear the test of this principle, it would necessarily bring with it one or other of two consequences:—it would either prove a plurality of Deities, or not leave to us a single unoriginated Being in the universe:—that is, it would unquestionably land us either in Polytheism, or Atheism!

But I must not, Mr. Editor, trespass too far upon you at once,—even tho' the materials for thus confronting Mr. Bagot with himself be as abundant as any one need wish. If the notice about to be taken of his book will be the means of putting it into more hands, I am satisfied that its increased circulation will serve our cause. For the reader of any discernment cannot but observe that his statements throughout are mutually destructive; and that his pen, like the stylus of the ancients, is well calculated to erase with one end, the inscription produced by the other.

Yours, &c.

J. MITCHEL.

---

## CONTROVERSY.

"These reasons may perhaps look odly

"To the wicked, though they convince the godly." BUTLER.

It is a very common practice among many of our would-be "*Liberals*," to expatiate in no very measured terms, and with great earnestness and zeal in the cause of religion upon the baneful effects of *controversy*. It is asserted by such, that it destroys that love, harmony, and unanimity, which should always be found among christians,—that it arouses many of the most malignant passions of our nature—that, instead of convincing either party, it tends to widen still further the breach that already exists between them—and in short, leaves each more bigoted to his peculiar tenets than before.

This, I allow, is too frequently the case. When two first-rate controversionalists, the leaders of opposing parties, whose differences are perhaps upon some minor points of belief, each priding himself upon his powers of argumentation, each firmly convinced of the truth of his own peculiar views, prejudiced perhaps in their favour by a long train of powerful associations, are pitted against each other as prize-fighters, inflamed only with the desire of victory, the beneficial results can be but scanty.

If we glance for a moment at the motives by which the spectators of this wordy conflict are actuated in frequenting the arena of public controversy, we shall find that but few indeed are impelled simply by the love of truth, and consequently that there is little or no advantage to be derived from the angry discussions on *theoretical* subjects, which it is scarcely possible, satisfactorily to settle. The greater number come for the purpose of sustaining by their countenance and approbation their favourite champion. They applaud or disapprove according as the signal for approbation or censure is held forth to them by their leaders. Upon such a description of individuals, power of lungs, and fierceness of gesticulation always have a much more spirit-stirring effect than the most cogent arguments, if otherwise delivered. We will readily grant then, that on such, no change can possibly be effected, farther, than that they will be more deeply rooted in their prejudices be they ever so erroneous. Others come, little interested in the discussions of either party, belonging perhaps to a sect of a different persuasion altogether, actuated more by curiosity, and a desire of hearing what could possibly be said on such a subject by either side. Here again, in all human probability there will be no change for the better.

By far the smallest number come undecided, or wavering in regard to the correctness of their former belief. But here again, if the combatants be equally matched, a person of this description remains in as great a state of perplexity as before. He listens with great attention to what each has to say; at first he is very well pleased with all he hears: as the speaker goes on, it is still better, he agrees with him in almost all points; and when he has concluded; "well, that is decidedly the

cleverest man I ever heard ;” “ He and I agree perfectly.” When his opponent rises, our spectator is at first prepossessed against him ; but as he goes on to demolish the grand structure of his adversary, our friend begins to doubt that he might have been too rash in adopting his former opinions. “ Ha ! I never thought of that, I see evidently I was wrong in that point, and indeed I am not so sure about this one either. It may be that this man is perfectly correct, as that idea never struck me before, at least it never was suggested to me in so strong a point of view.” Thus is our poor friend completely bewildered—his mind is altogether in a state of agitation—he finds nothing on which it is possible for him to rest secure—he departs even more undecided than when he came. Such then is the effect on a weak-minded, credulous, yet well intentioned person.

Owing to the manner in which the discussion is conducted, or it may be, owing to the absolute impossibility of ever satisfactorily settling the question ; a *sensible* person, eager after information, will be rather careful of hastily adopting the associations of either party, and so, to him neither will any lasting benefit accrue.

Tell me not, however, that all controversy is useless. If the subject be one of importance, the obtaining correct views of which will tend to the general improvement of mankind, and if the discussion be conducted with that spirit which should mark all our proceedings—if, setting aside every other consideration, we devote ourselves alone to the attainment of *truth*, then I assert that controversy *is*, and ever *will be* of decided advantage. Yet it is by no means necessary, that we should always treat our opponents with as much politeness and gentleness, through fear of exciting any irritating feeling, as if we were discussing the most ordinary topic. We must show that we are in earnest in what we say, and that we deeply feel the value of spreading truth, and dragging error from its lurking place, to be exposed before the mid-day sun in its naked deformity. Thus at last will the cause of justice, of truth and religion, prevail, and exhibit their pure and ennobling effects upon an awakened world. Controversy has been the means of opening the eyes of thousands on many important subjects. Men now see doctrines which were once revered and considered as most sacred, in a



far different point of view. Many now abandon that which is an "*incomprehensible mystery*," for the purpose of adopting the plain, simple, and easily understood statements of Scripture. How does it happen, I ask, that what we conceive to be correct views on many important subjects, are, in the present day, entertained by a numerous and respectable part of the community? How does it happen that the eyes of the most intelligent have of late been opened, and their minds disabused of error? Simply, from free, fearless, and candid investigation, accompanied, at the same time, with active efforts for the propagation of such views. If it had not been for *controversy*, where now would have been that noble, and disinterested, though small band of *true* Presbyterians, whose late glorious struggle for independence, and liberty of conscience, has gained for them a name which shall descend to after-ages, and be repeated with reverence and enthusiasm long after they themselves have ceased to exist? They would have sunk into mean and abject slaves, bowing submissively to the decrees and mandates of a petty and despicable oligarchy—they would have most wofully degenerated from those noble principles which their ancestors had so gloriously established, and tamely sunk into that mental degradation to which the Synod of Ulster has most disgracefully submitted. Such would have been the state of things at present, had not men bold and honest enough to assert their Christian privileges, stood forward and controverted, in the very face of Ulster, proceedings, which would be the means of giving a death-blow to Presbyterianism both in spirit and in name.

It is certainly a very fine subject to descant upon, the beauty of peace and harmony, and brotherly affection among Christians; but when these cannot be obtained without the compromise of conscience—without yielding up that which is dearer to us than life itself—*truth* and *religious liberty*,—we must, notwithstanding many disadvantages, be found among the number of those who raise their voice for their own vindication—for the overthrow of error, and the propagation of what we humbly conceive to be truth. I therefore consider it to be an imperative duty on all among you, who value your religious opinions, to show, by your action and conver-

sation that you are fully alive to their importance, and that you are determined to let no false delicacy have the slightest weight in deterring you from a manly and steady defence of your principles, when attacked, or from seizing all *proper* opportunities of exposing absurdity and error.

Belfast, 6th March, 1832.

M.

---

### NATIONAL EDUCATION.

*The following remarks on the plan for General Education were lately addressed by a Minister of the Remonstrant Synod to his congregation.*

FELLOW CHRISTIANS AND FRIENDS,—I deem it my duty, to say a few words to you, on a subject which has recently engaged a considerable share of public attention; and with regard to which, the most scandalous misrepresentations have been industriously, and but too successfully propagated. The subject to which I allude is the plan brought forward by Government, for affording the much required benefit of Education to the Irish poor of all religious persuasions.

Anxious to dispel the worse than Egyptian darkness, in which the lower classes of our countrymen are unfortunately involved,—anxious to disseminate amongst them the rudiments of civilization, and convert them into better neighbours, better subjects, and better men, his majesty's ministers have announced their intention to expend annually a large sum of money in helping to diffuse, widely and generally, the inestimable blessings of a good education. Anxious at the same time, to allay, if possible, those sectarian jealousies and animosities which have long been our country's curse; and knowing that the recollection of early intimacy would be likely to produce feelings of kindness in after life, ministers have proposed that in the schools about to be established, Catholic and Protestant children, shall be reared in habits of intercourse with each other, and receive without distinction, all such literary, moral, and *religious* instruction as they can be prevailed on to receive in common.

This comprehensive plan has occasioned no little consternation amongst place-holders, and place-hunters,—persons who thoroughly understand, and who have long successfully practised the tyrant's favourite maxim, "divide and govern"—persons whose study it has been to keep the inhabitants of this country at variance with one another, that *they* may thus be enabled to plunder the community, and feast without molestation on the first fruits and fatlings of the land. These interested individuals, in concert with some who are their underlings and with others who are their dupes, have raised a hue and cry against the liberal system of Education contemplated by Government. The tocsin of alarm has been rung—watchmen of Zion have rushed to the battlements, and sounded the "dread note of preparation"—and the walls of God's house have been made to re-echo, furious and factious harangues. Congregational meetings, and county meetings, and meetings of a still more general character have been held, at which it has been vociferously proclaimed to the ignorant multitude, that the members of our present patriotic administration have entered into a conspiracy to overturn the protestant religion, and erect popery or even paganism on its ruins; and that in order to facilitate the accomplishment of this diabolical machination, they have framed the new system of School discipline so as in the first instance to mutilate the word of God, and afterwards take it totally and entirely from the people. In the vulgar and disgusting slang employed by one of those spiritually minded orators at a late gathering, "The bible is about to be burked." The common people have been addressed through the medium of their prejudices, and made to believe that Protestant pupils will be prohibited from reading the *whole* of the sacred volume—will be allowed access only to such portions of it, as Catholic Priests may choose to prescribe, and be hindered from receiving such religious instructions as their own parents and pastors might choose to instil.—A more egregious misrepresentation was never uttered by the lips of layman or clergyman.—The assertion is a strong one—That it is true as it is strong, I shall prove beyond the possibility of contradiction, by reading the plan on which National Schools are to be conducted, as that plan has

been officially promulgated by the board of commissioners nominated to superintend its execution.

These commissioners are seven in number. At a public meeting of the "Friends of God and of the Bible" for such is the modest appellation which a leading alarmist has arrogated to himself and his coadjutors—at a public meeting, I say, held not long since in the town of Strabane, it was asserted by a Gentleman who formerly was a Fellow of Trinity College, and who now holds perhaps the very richest living in the Diocese of Derry—"that *more* than one half of the commissioners are members of the Romish Church"—I was not present on the occasion, and therefore I cannot tell whether this "Friend of God" had the grace to blush when he uttered the notorious falsehood. Be that as it may, a notorious falsehood it most unquestionably was; though, no doubt, it would be swallowed with greediness by the poor credulous dupes to whom it was told.

The fact is, my Friends, that of the seven commissioners that constitute the board of Education, five are Protestants, and only two are Catholics. Thus it appears, that in the formation of the Board, *we* have got something *more than fair play*. Our fellow subjects adhering to the See of Rome, are at least four times as numerous as all the other inhabitants of Ireland combined, and, generally considered, the young people of their communion are poorer, and of course stand more in need of gratuitous instruction than the young people of ours. So that whatever cause they may have to complain of being inadequately represented, *we* can have none.

The five protestant members are, His Grace the Duke of Leinster; Doctor Whately, Archbishop of Dublin; Dr. Sadler, a Fellow of Trinity College; Mr. Carlile, a Presbyterian Minister; and Counsellor Holmes, a Presbyterian Layman.—The two Catholics are Dr. Murray, Titular Archbishop of Dublin, and Mr. Blake, Chief Remembrancer of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer, and one of the most liberal-minded men with whom it ever was my lot to come in contact.

The following is the plan of Education laid down.

"They, (the Commissioners,) will require, that the schools be kept open for a certain number of hours, on four or on five days of



the week, at the discretion of the Commissioners, for moral and literary education only: and that the remaining one or two days in the week, be set apart, for giving, separately, such religious education to the children, as may be approved of by the clergy of their respective persuasions. They will also permit and encourage the clergy to give religious instruction, either before or after the ordinary school hours, on the other days of the week

“They will require to have the entire controul over all books to be used in the schools, whether in the combined moral and literary, or separate religious instruction; none to be employed in the former, except under the sanction of the Board, nor in the latter, but with the approbation of those members of the Board who are of the same religious persuasion with the children for whose use they are intended.

*Although it is not designed to exclude from the list of books for the combined instruction such portions of Sacred History, or of religious and moral teaching, as may be approved of by the entire Board; it is to be understood, that the use of such books is by no means intended to constitute a perfect and sufficient religious education, or to supersede the necessity of separate religious instruction on the days set apart for that purpose.*

“They will require that in all Schools a Register be kept, in which shall be entered the attendance, or non-attendance of each on Divine Worship on Sundays.

“They will allow to the individuals or bodies, applying for aid, the appointment of their Teachers, subject to the following restrictions and regulations: 1st. All teachers, (except of schools now existing, and which shall be approved of by the Board,) shall have received previous instruction in a model-school in Dublin, to be sanctioned by the Board, and shall also have obtained from the Board testimonials of good conduct and general fitness. 2ndly. All teachers shall be liable to be fined, suspended, or removed, when the commissioners deem it necessary.

“The Commissioners by themselves or their inspectors, to be allowed to visit and examine the schools whenever they think fit.

“They will particularly require that the principles of the following lesson be strictly inculcated in all schools approved of by them, and that the lesson itself be printed, and copies of it on paste-board, be hung up in each school:

“Christians should endeavour, as the Apostle Paul commands them, to ‘live peaceably with all men;’ (Romans, ch. 12. v. 18,) even with those of a different religious persuasion.

“Our Saviour Christ commanded his disciples to ‘love one another.’ He taught them to love even their enemies, to bless those that cursed them, and to pray for those who persecuted them. He, himself, prayed for his murderers.

“Many men hold erroneous doctrines; but we ought not to hate or persecute them. We ought to seek for the truth, and to hold fast what we are convinced is the truth; but not to treat harshly those who are in error. Jesus Christ did not intend his Religion to be forced on men by violent means. He would not allow his Disciples to fight for him.



"If any persons treat us unkindly we must not do the same to them; for Christ and his Apostles have taught us not to return evil for evil. If we would obey Christ, we must do to others, not as they do to us, but as we should wish them to do to us.

"Quarrelling with our neighbours and abusing them, is not the way to convince them that we are in the right, and they in the wrong. It is more likely to convince them that we have not a Christian spirit.

"We ought to show ourselves followers of Christ, who, 'when he was reviled, reviled not again.' (1. Pet. ch. 2. v. 23.) by behaving gently and kindly to every one."

As one of the main objects of His Majesty's Government is to unite in one system children of different creeds, and as much must depend upon the co-operation of the resident clergy, the Board will look with peculiar favour upon applications proceeding either from,

1st. A Protestant Clergymen and Roman Catholic Clergyman, conjointly.

2dly. A Clergyman of the one denomination and a certain number of Laymen of the other.

3dly. "Laymen of both denominations."

My friends, does this indicate a design to "murder the Bible?" Does this indicate a design, to subvert the Protestant faith; and establish Popery on its ruins? Does this indicate a design to preclude persons of our communion from educating their children according to the dictates of their own consciences? The men who could assert such things, whilst the regulations which have now been read, were spread before their eyes, must be either weak or wicked. Charity must be stretched and strained, before we can acquit them of saying what they know to be untrue.

Not satisfied with allowing two entire days out of the six ordinary ones in the week "*to be set apart for giving separately, such religious education to the children, as may be approved of by the clergy of their respective persuasions;*" the commissioners declare "*that they will permit and encourage the clergy to give religious instruction either before or after the ordinary school hours on the other days of the week.*"

This indiscriminate encouragement and permission to pastors of all persuasions, to instruct their own hearers in their own creed, has been represented as highly objectionable.—Why, exclaim the alarmists—Why should Protestants countenance Catholics in teaching the erroneous doctrines of the Church of Rome? This objection

might be rebutted in various ways. It might be urged that the encouragement afforded, amounts merely to the concession of one particular opportunity; and that opportunities equally favourable, the Catholic Clergy already possess, and cannot be deprived of. It might be urged, that it is just as hard on Romanists to connive at the inculcation of Protestant tenets, as it can be on Protestants to connive at the inculcation of the distinguishing tenets of Catholicism. But I take my stand on another and a broader principle—I know that ignorant and narrow-minded men are prone to fix salvation on the minutest peculiarities of their own creed; but I know also, that only narrow-minded and ignorant men will contradict me, when I say, that with regard to the essential doctrines and the moral precepts of the gospel, christians of every denomination are agreed. All sects enforce the necessity of fearing God and keeping his commands. Conceiving my own system of belief, to be the best in some important respects, I would embrace every fair and suitable opportunity of making converts—but failing to effect this object, or deeming the attempt to effect it hopeless, I would not only permit, but *encourage* those who could not be gained over, to sit at the feet of a Catholic or Calvinistic Gamaliel, sooner than allow them to remain in utter ignorance, of the duties and doctrines taught by our Saviour. The Catholic, or the Calvinist would no doubt, teach some things which I deem to be wrong, but he would also teach many things highly conducive both to temporal and eternal well-being. The few and comparatively unimportant errors imbibed, might in after life be corrected—or supposing that they should not, this evil would be far more than counterbalanced, by the *good* which must inevitably be gained. The golden ore, though blended with some dross would still be metal of great value.

The alarmists assert that the plan proposed will enable Catholics to exercise a controlling power of the religious education of Protestants—No such thing—The evil complained of is guarded against with all possible care,—A strict impartiality is maintained. Lest the two Catholic members of the Board, should have any influence over the scriptural instruction of Protestants, or the Protestant members any influence over the

spiritual nurture of Catholics—it is declared, that during the separate doctrinal tuition of the pupils “*no books shall be introduced, except such as shall be approved of by the Commissioners who are of the same communion with the children for whose use the books are intended.*”

For example—no publication shall be read by young people of the established church, which has not been sanctioned by the Duke of Leinster, Dr. Whately, and Dr. Sadler. No publication shall be put into the hands of young people of the Presbyterian Church, which has not been approved by Mr. Carlile and Counsellor Holmes; and no publication shall be employed by young people connected with the Catholic Church which has not received the imprimatur of Dr. Murray, and Mr. Blake—Even-handed justice is rendered to all parties—persons of one faith will not be allowed to interfere with the peculiar religious tenets of pupils professing another.

The scheme contemplated, will not afford Priests of the Catholic persuasion, a single right, privilege, or advantage of which they are not in full possession at the present moment—whilst, at the same time it affords persons of *every* persuasion ample freedom, ample facilities, and ample time, to communicate doctrinal lessons to the children who may be of like faith with themselves.

That Protestants and Romanists should be equally restrained from all attempts at making proselytes, *during the hours appointed for joint and general instruction*, is no hardship whatever. To concede such a privilege to the members of any one profession would be an act of injustice to the members of every other.—For be it remembered that the national schools, are to be supported chiefly, not from funds accruing from the revenues of any particular church, nor by the voluntary contributions of individuals—but by taxes imposed by the legislature, and levied without distinction, from persons of all religious denominations. Therefore, to allow those seminaries to be employed as engines for kidnapping young Catholics—which is the declared object of many evangelical agitators—would be to compel our fellow subjects to pay for the subversion of their own creed. On the other hand, were equal license conceded to both parties,—were hot-headed zealots of each sect indiscriminately and simultaneously let loose on the poor innocent children, and allowed to scramble for converts,

what scenes of indecent contention would inevitably ensue? Institutions intended to promote peace, and harmony, and charity, would be converted into pandemoniums of discord and confusion. In fact, without sacrificing the inestimable advantages, which must result from educating Catholics and Protestants in the same schools, no other system than the present, could with propriety have been adopted.

Alarmists complain that the opportunities allowed for doctrinal instruction are quite too circumscribed;—and think it exceedingly hard that every hour of every day in the week has not been rendered employable in this important business. The complaint is groundless.—For purely scriptural education, abundant time and abundant opportunities have been afforded. Government has provided, that each Protestant pupil attending the national schools, shall be at liberty during the greater part of four days in the week to read the *whole Bible*, and receive such expositions of it as his parents or pastors may deem proper to communicate—and that the three remaining days, including the sabbath, he *may entirely appropriate* to the same purpose. It will be found on computation, that the hours allowed for *religious* improvement in each week, out-number those which will be left for all the other departments of education—surely this might satisfy any reasonable person.

Some of those who now declaim most violently against the proposed scheme of school discipline—and insist on the necessity of an education almost exclusively scriptural, have to my certain knowledge, been for years and years, in the practice of sending their own children to schools where the Bible was never on any occasion introduced. A learned Doctor of Divinity who has latterly exhibited himself as a strenuous stickler for “the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible,” seems to have undergone a wonderful change of sentiment in the course of a very short time. In the year 1825, he was examined on oath before the Commissioners of education inquiry. The following are his recorded answers to some of the questions proposed to him.—

After stating that he had seven schools under his more immediate superintendence, and that he was in the habit of visiting each of them “once a month,”



"not going till after school hours," he goes on to describe the manner in which he instructed and catechised the children of his flock. Being asked, whether he found the time mentioned by him sufficient for those purposes—he replies—"yes—amply sufficient—and did the discipline of the schools permit, one day in the month would nearly suffice"—suffice, you will observe, for grounding in Presbyterian principles, his catechumens, not in one school, but in seven different schools, situate at a considerable distance, each from the other. In 1825, this Reverend gentleman virtually *swears*, that *twelve hours* in the year, would be sufficient for the religious instruction of the young Calvinists attending any particular seminary. In 1832, the same gentleman *asserts*, that "Ministers are plotting the murder of the Bible, the demoralization of Protestants, and the ascendancy of Popery"—although, in each seminary to be established, they will "permit and encourage" a Cooke, a Morgan, or a Bagot, to instil anti-catholic principles into the young ones of his own communion—and allow him for this purpose, not "*twelve hours*," but *one hundred and four entire days* every year, besides morning and evening opportunities, almost innumerable. On which of these two occasions are we to suppose that His Reverence was jesting? A spirit of crossness and perverseness, seems to have entered into him and his associates.—They take pleasure in giving unnecessary annoyance. Their conduct is similar to that of a certain worker in iron, who slept throughout the whole day, and caused his anvil to ring during the silent watches of the night, for the malevolent purpose of disturbing his neighbours.

(*To be continued.*)

---

#### THE CHOLERA.

*Moral Cautions on the anticipated approach of the Cholera; a Sermon, by W. J. Fox, London.*

---

[A review of this discourse has been sent to us, together with some very able and interesting original remarks on the same subject. The whole article is much too long for insertion in a work like ours, and we have, therefore, been compelled to select a few paragraphs. Our respected Correspondent will, we hope, perceive the



impossibility of devoting to any one subject, so large a space in our pages, as the publication of the entire paper would have required.—B. C.]

---

Mr. Fox has, in the Sermon before us, happily chosen the prevailing current of the public thought, and directed it into its proper channel. His discourse is eloquent and well-timed. He has shown that suffering, disease and death, are as surely the ordinations of a kind Providence, as the motions of a planet, or the unerring exactitude of an hundred systems.

“Man,” he says, “not subject to pain and disease, would be comparatively, if not completely, an unthinking being. He would want one great and common stimulus to reflection. One motive would be withdrawn which often impels him to recal the past, to investigate the present, to anticipate the future. He would have less thoughtfulness, and therefore he would have less moral worth. The immunity of unconscious matter from evil, belongs, not to its height, but to its lowness in the scale of existence. It is incapable of the nobler operations by which man foresees, determines, and avoids. And though the least dignified aim of these operations may be in the avoidance of physical evil; yet that prepares for the more dignified uses of the same faculties. It helps to educate man for looking forward even to eternity, and for rising into the moral image of God.”

He then proceeds to show what are the moral responsibilities attendant on this much-dreaded pestilence. We had marked many beautiful passages, but find they would be too long for our work; they are worthy a place any where. To the Sermon itself, we would therefore direct our readers, as well worthy of perusal. Let us, however, take the following passages as a specimen of Mr. Fox's eloquent exhortation:—

“If it must come, let it not impair or pervert our piety; let it not degrade the character of our devotion. If pestilence raged around us in forms far worse than there is reason now to apprehend; if towns were depopulated, and the rank grass grew in the streets of cities, and loved ones fell by our side, and the dead were left to bury their dead,—it would not be the less true that God is love, the almighty Father, the universal Father, the everlasting Father. Some would blaspheme the more, and profane the name of their Maker; some would tremble and crouch before his supposed vindictive wrath; but Christian faith would love, and trust, and bless amid the desolation. Filial piety to God, is not a sensation produced by the immediate action of some external pleasurable cause. It is not like the torrent, mighty after showers, and vanishing in the drought; but the overflowing stream fed from a living fountain.

"If plague or pestilence be a reason why God is not a being of boundless love and mercy, and the object of ceaseless, grateful piety; why let us overturn our altars now, and close our temples, for such things have been in the world, again and again. The good will not predominate the less, nor be less the ultimate result of all, when we are suffering the evil, should we be called to its endurance. And as this is the right (though it may be difficult,) feeling of endurance, so is it, and more easy of anticipation. Let us look forward in the light of divine love. If the peril comes, it has its mission; it comes from God, and for his purposes. If so we anticipate, we may be sure that to us it will be a mission of mercy. We shall not be afraid, for we shall have nothing to fear. 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;' and that trust is amply justified, and will be gloriously rewarded."—*Sermon*, p. 14, 15.

Again:—

"If it must come, let it not deaden our charities. There will be pre-eminent need of their life and energy. Such times are apt to close up and harden men's hearts. They contract themselves into that narrow circle within which they hope the enemy will not be able to force an entrance. But the poor—the amelioration of whose condition should be seldom absent from the good man's mind,—will be likely to suffer the most under such a visitation. In his more customary forms, death may be impartial. He is privileged not to respect persons or station. But the mode in which circumstances compel the poor to live, marks them out for the visitations of contagious or epidemic disease. It should mark them out also, for a thoughtfulness and charity which will stand erect in the storm, whatever else is levelled. They will need to be cared for; and He who may command destruction to waste them at noon-day, also commands that morning, noon and night, shall charity repair the waste. It should anticipate the evil on their behalf; and in the hearts of Christians should the spirit of the Gospel say with its author, when he wept over the coming calamities of the outcasts of Jerusalem, 'I would gather thy children as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings.'"—*Sermon*, p. 16.

No doubt there will be much of personal suffering, and private misery, in this malady, but we think that even now good can be discerned.

The poor of our crowded cities have been too much neglected. Their claims on the community as parts of that community, have been disregarded, and they had not been cared for, but for the dread of the infection spreading from them to the wealthier classes. When they were at length looked to—when but a partial and transitory glance was made at the misery, filth and poverty, crowded together in the lanes of our cities; the hearts of men turned from the revolting picture. Especially in the southern part of Ireland, a mass of wretchedness and destitution has been discovered, which even the

pen of the romancer would fail to depict. Many families, composed of old and young, male and female, were huddled together into one small room, each family securing a corner for their own department, and heaps of filth were found collected even under their wretched, and almost rotten, straw pallets. Some, scarce clothed ; others, destitute of the slightest sound covering, either by day or night ; all in a state of unparalleled misery and want. And these were in the centre of one of our opulent cities, in the very thoroughfare, and had been so for years, and were only made known to us by the health-officers, who were called into action in the present emergency.

Could this state of things last? Could the artisan, without work—seeing his family famishing—without clothes or shelter, remain much longer destitute and neglected? Could human nature continue much longer inactive under such a hopeless pressure of misery, and not have made necessity the only law for rapine and robbery? We fear not. We fear disturbances would soon have broken out, and that our stores and corn-warehouses would have been sacked and destroyed. But the passive patience of the people is wonderful, and it is surprising how long patience will live on hope. Attention has, however, been called to the state of the poor, and something has been done, if we only take into account, that most of their present urgent necessities have, in some small measure, been relieved, and an interest shown in their condition. Even this obtains their thanks, and raises them in the scale of their own minds, for nothing tends to elevate a man more, than his feeling himself of some value to the community. Much, we trust, will also be effected, if the rich can be made to know, in order to remove, the accumulated poverty, neglect and wretchedness, which exists among our poorer class of people in this country; and much also, may be learnt, from these poor, but patient people. While the wealthier will have cause to bless God for the benefits they enjoy, and show their thankfulness by imparting a portion of those good things, they will learn the patient endurance with which our humbler fellow-citizens support their minds in their many distresses. Our feelings, and the whole tone of society are of too aristocratic and exclusive a caste. The different grades of

society do not unite and blend one with the other—they are too far apart to know or understand, on the one side, the many privations and necessities of the poor; or, on the other, they want the wish to be improved, and to profit by instruction. The steps are too wide, either for those who wish to ascend, or for those who are willing to visit those below.

We think this may be amended. We think the cause of the poor will be better known, and the remedies better understood and applied, by the visits of the charitable to the houses of the poorer orders. In these remarks, we address the active and well-intentioned middle class, who comprise the true wealth and power of our country. But this is not all. The low state of moral feeling, and great ignorance into which the mass of our people are plunged, and the very inefficient remedies that have so long existed, are now proved to be totally insufficient, and some more energetic and more useful plans must be adopted. The complete inadequacy of our Established Church to meet the increasing wants of our lower classes, is now glaringly apparent. Neglect of the most careless character has been the fault of her ministers, and the people have, in some parts of Ireland, almost entirely lapsed into the hands of the Romish Priests. This must be changed; but great and long-continued exertions are requisite to bring back even a part of the lost sheep. We are sure that Popery has been fostered by this neglect, and not only so, but it has increased and grown up with our rapidly increasing population.

But the Established Church will never do. This enormous and over-paid hierarchy,—supported by unjust and rapacious exactions from the people—has too long usurped the place of a more righteous and efficient system of religious teaching, and has not only polluted the means of instruction, but also impeded others in their well-meant and disinterested endeavours, to improve and ameliorate the humbler classes. It is unsuited, totally unsuited, to the great mass of our people, and it is therefore incumbent on all Dissenters, and particularly on Unitarians, to exert themselves for the improvement of the working orders. The people must be raised in the scale of their thoughts, motives, and actions, and nothing can be so effectual, as instilling into their minds just notions of Religion and Govern-



ment. Should this be effected, we think the Cholera will not have visited us in vain. Should we see, instead of an idle, intemperate, and dissolute crowd,—only governed by their passions and worst propensities,—a people raised into beings of thinking, rational, and industrious character, we shall with gratitude acknowledge, that “sweet are the uses of adversity.”

We sincerely hope this will be a new era in our history as a people, and that the humane feelings excited by the present times, will be productive of much benefit to ourselves, and to the nation of which we form a part. We trust that these benevolent exertions respecting our poor, will not cease with the cause that gave them birth, but that effectual remedies will be provided for the prevention of pauperism, and the proper support of the aged and indigent.

We know, indeed, that the dread of infection reaching from the abodes of the poor to those of the rich, has been the great incitement to this exertion, and that fear is the chief stimulant. But we are also confident, that there are many who are as sincerely anxious for the moral and religious advancement of the poor, as for their political and temporal melioration. They know them to be ill-educated, as well as ill-clothed; badly nurtured as well as badly housed; and that the improvement of our country mainly depends on raising the working classes in the scale of society.

*Cork.*

---

#### BIBLE STORIES: BY THE REV. S. WOOD.

THE season is now at hand, when Sunday Schools in the country will be re-opened, and we have great pleasure in warmly recommending to our readers a most useful publication, advertised on our cover, and called “BIBLE STORIES.” It is the work of a judicious and pious man, and is well adapted for the youthful mind of every religious denomination. We insert one short story, that our readers may have an opportunity of judging for themselves. The “ADDRESSES FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS WITH APPROPRIATE PRAYERS” by the same author, should be in the possession of all Sunday-school Teachers.



## PARABLE OF THE EWE-LAMB.

(2 Samuel, xi., xii. 1—25.)

"AFTER Saul's death, David was made king. He reigned forty years, and for the most part gloriously. He subdued the enemies of his country; he executed judgment and justice in the land; he brought up the ark from a private house where it had been for some time, and placed it on Mount Zion; and he made preparations for building a grand temple to the honour of Almighty God.

"David was in the main a good man, and a good king; but he did some things which were very wicked, and one thing in particular, which occasioned him much sorrow and trouble. He committed wickedness with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah; and in order to conceal what he had done, he practised shameful deceit, and afterwards, when he found he could not accomplish his purposes by any other means, he ordered that Uriah should be placed in the front of the battle, and that then his fellow soldiers should retire from him, so that he might be killed by the weapons of the enemy. Accordingly, Uriah was set in the front of the battle, and was killed by the Philistines, and David took Bathsheba to be his wife.

"Upon this God sent Nathan the prophet to reprove him for what he had done. Now Nathan did not like to tell him at once what a wicked man he thought him to be, but he related to him a parable or story, which was this:

" 'There were,' said he 'two men in one city, the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: it grew up together with him and his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller to the rich man; and he spared to take of his own flock, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.' "

"Now David never suspected that the parable was meant to show how wicked he had himself been; and his anger was greatly kindled, and he said to Nathan, 'As the Lord liveth, the man who hath done this shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.' "

"Then Nathan told David plainly that *he* was the man whom he meant in the parable; for that, although God had delivered him out of the hand of Saul, and made him king of Israel, and given him great riches and honour, yet he had caused Uriah the Hittite to be killed with the sword, and had taken his wife to be *his* wife. For this he told him that God would greatly afflict him, and make him unhappy in his family.

"Accordingly, God took from him the child which had been born to him by Bathsheba; and He caused him to have trouble with his other sons,—all which was a deep grief to David, and made him shed many bitter tears of repentance."

"We see here, as in other instances, how one fault leads to another. David committed one heinous sin, and in order to conceal it, he committed another, which was still greater. This should teach us to abstain from the very appearance of evil, lest we be led on from

one sin to another, and become very wicked. Whatever God has commanded us to do, that we must do with all our might; and we must carefully abstain from what He has forbidden. We must do justly and love mercy, and walk humbly before our God: and then He will accept and reward us. But if we suffer ourselves to depart from his law, He will sooner or later, bring heavy affliction upon us, in order that He may lead us to true repentance and amendment.

"We see here, too, how much more quickly people find out the faults of their neighbours than their own. David easily perceived that the man described in the parable had acted very unjustly, but he considered not that he had himself been much more to blame. Let us, then, search our own hearts, and examine our thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in us; and let us pray Him, who knoweth our hearts, to lead us in the way everlasting."

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHING.

At a Meeting of the Boston Sunday-School Society, the question offered for discussion was, whether Sunday Schools should be exclusively devoted to religious instruction. The following are extracts from the different speeches made on the occasion:—

PROFESSOR HENRY WARE—"The Sunday-School teacher is a minister of Christ. He is to teach Christ, and as Christ taught; he is to teach the Bible, and as the Bible teaches. How was it with the great model of Christian teaching, the Saviour himself? He does not always teach in the express language of direct Revelation; but he bid us look and learn for ourselves, from the lily, the vineyard, the sparrow, the harvest, the sheepfold. Much of his most affecting instruction is enforced by such illustrations. Why should not his ministers do the same? Why not carry into the Sunday-School the flowers of the field, and tell of the birds of heaven, and discourse, like Jesus, on the Providence which watches over the falling sparrow?"

Some persons have objected to the introduction of *stories* into the Sunday-School, and, doubtless, it should be done with moderation and discretion. But they need not be excluded,—for here again let us ask, how did Christ teach? Was it not his favourite mode to teach by parables? Are not the stories of Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, and the Ten Virgins, as instructive as if they had been couched in a different form? So that when you carry a wholesome story to your class, you teach as Christ taught. It is necessary, (and perhaps not necessary,) to add a brief caution, for there is danger that in bringing forward instruction from Natural History, and by tales, the great end should be sometimes lost sight of, and knowledge and entertainment be substituted for religious impressions. Against this we cannot too cautiously guard. We must consider every thing as subsidiary to religious impressions, and pursue it, so far only, as it may accomplish this purpose."—In conclusion, Mr. Ware described the happy effects which might be hoped, in thus bringing instruction from various sources in aid of religious

truth.—“ We wish to make a child at all times religious, at all times governed by the sense of God. We must then show him God not only in the Bible; he cannot have the Bible at every moment. He goes abroad in the midst of a thousand objects, which will draw him away from his Maker, unless we can show him that God is in them also. But, if we teach him to see God, and to feel his power and presence in all things; in the sun, the air, the grass; in every animal and plant, and every human form, and every passing event, then he will be reminded of him by every thing he sees, and will never forget him. He will feel his divine presence at all times, and set the Lord always before him. This should be our aim, this will accomplish the purposes of the Scriptures, and this we shall accomplish, when having made the Scriptures the foundation, the spirit, the all-in-all, we combine with them, and sanctify by union with them, every thing which God has made. ’

Mr. LEWIS G. PRAY, maintained that the instruction of Sunday-schools should be strictly religious. “ But what constituted religious instruction? Some say that it should be restricted to the Scriptures; but if in his way to the Sunday-school, a teacher should cull a beautiful flower, and carry it to his class, explain its formation, its properties, point out its beauty and fragrance, and from this object lead up their minds to the wisdom and goodness of its Maker, would not this be religious instruction? and would it not be calculated to leave a deep, and abiding impression on their minds? Or, should he lead them to contemplate the heavenly bodies, explain to them that they are worlds, the workmanship of God, and were controlled and directed by his Almighty Power, would not this be religious instruction? and would they not, ever after, read with greater interest and delight that beautiful psalm,—‘ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth forth his handy-work ’? And is not this one of the best effects of religious instruction? The introduction of stories is objected to by some, but it seemed to him with as little reason as in the other case. They serve to teach children the moral duties, the duties which they owe to one another and to society. Mr. Pray had no idea of morals separate from religion. *Morals are religion in action.*

Mr. BLAKE remarked—“ That there are some children for whom the Scriptures are not the most proper book, because they are too young to understand it. Natural religion should be resorted to for that purpose. If we would convince the child of the being of a God, there is a better way than by referring him to the Bible. He readily understands that the toy which amuses him had a maker. In like manner we can explain to him the motions of the sun, moon and stars; the formation of animals, their protection against the weather, and by this course of reasoning convince him that God is an adequate cause for these things. The same with regard to his attributes. The child may be made to love God. Why does he love his parents, but for the kindness he receives from them? He receives greater kindness from God. Revealed religion, though paramount to natural religion ought not to be the only thing taught.”

“SCRIPTURE PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS  
OF UNITARIANISM,” &c.

THE following passages from a work under the above title which it is proposed to publish by subscription, have been sent to us, as specimens by which its plan and nature may be, in some degree, estimated. The work itself is of considerable extent, and abounds in references to the standard writers on both sides of the question. Thus much we have ascertained from a cursory glance at the manuscript: how far its publication may be likely to serve the cause of scriptural truth, we cannot at present undertake to say; but probably our readers on perusing the annexed extracts, will be able to form some judgment on the point. Whatever may be thought of the work, the author is known to us as a person who well deserves encouragement.

*Part First, Chap. I.] CHRIST INFERIOR TO GOD.*

43 (of MS.

\* \* \* \* \*

On reading the memoirs of Jesus, as reported by the four evangelists, we do not find *that* contradiction, or apparent contradiction, in his language and actions, which might naturally be expected if his person were composed of two natures so essentially different as those of humanity and divinity. The unsophisticated writers of the Gospel, in the narrative of their Master, give us an account of the labours and sufferings of *one being*—the operations of *one mind*. They represent Jesus Christ—not an infinitely small portion of him only—as an infant, a boy, and a man—as the Messenger, the Prophet, and the Servant of God—as God’s only-begotten or well-beloved Son;—expressions all of which intimate his inferiority to the Father of all. The reputedly orthodox, on the other hand, state, that he was God as well as man; and that he sustained some of the above-mentioned characters in his human nature only; that is, in one portion of his person, which sinks into insignificance when compared with the other. The evangelists report, that Jesus, *as the Son of God*, declared his total ignorance of the day of judgment: the Athanasians aver, that while as man he did not know it, he knew it as God. The historians of Christ mention, that he frequently addressed God in prayer: the preachers of the Gospel at the present day do not indeed deny that he prayed to the Father; but they characterize him as the omnipotent Jehovah; and it is obvious that such a being, having no superior, could not possibly address another in the language of supplication or of weakness. The apostle John quotes the words of his Master, that he of himself could do nothing: Calvin and others tell us that he is almighty.

To conclude: The doctrine of two natures in Christ has no foundation in the Bible. It is a fiction of the human brain—the product of false philosophy—the remnant of barbarous ages.



(5) OMNIPOTENCE. *contd.*

## II. Performance of Miracles.

28. Mat. viii. 3: And Jesus put forth his [hand,] and touched him, saying, *I will*; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.—*Parallel Passages*: Mark i. 41; Luke v. 13.

29. Mark iv. 39: And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, *Peace, be still*. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.—*Paral. Pas.* Mat. viii. 26; Luke viii. 24.

30. John xi. 43: He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, *come forth*.

*Citations.*

Jesus "spake with the authority and the majesty of one who was conscious of having *in himself* the necessary power."—*Wardlaw*.

"In our Lord's miracles, there was an ease and readiness which showed that he exerted inherent powers, and a command over nature which indicates its Lord."—*Hill*.

"The manner in which Christ wrought his miracles, in general without the least appearance of relying on any power but his own, was very different from that of prophets or apostles; for while they take great care to have it understood, that they were merely the instruments of him in whose name they spake, lest the honour should be ascribed to them; he authoritatively issued his mandates in his own name, acted entirely by his own power, and manifested forth his own glory."—*Scott*.

"If we judge from the language of Scripture, and attend only to small portions of the lives of other men; we might infer that they had the same power which has been ascribed to Christ, especially with respect to Peter, Acts. v. 15. This account fully equals any thing we read of our Saviour himself; and yet it is not supposed, that these cures were performed by any power belonging to Peter, or that it depended on his mere will like that of waking: neither, therefore, ought we to infer the same with respect to those of Jesus. So with respect to Paul, Acts xix. 12."—*Priestley*.

"On this subject there seems to have been a striking difference between Jesus and his apostles. He had a power of working miracles at his own pleasure; but they, being limited to such occasions as were deemed by the Son conducive to divine glory, were sometimes unable to work miracles when they must have desired it; as Paul, when he left Trophimus sick at Miletus."—*Kenrick*.

*Illustrative Texts.*

(a) John v. 36: ...The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.—Chap. x. 25: The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. (Compare with the preceding verse.—See also Chap. xi. 42, quoted below.)

(b) John xiv. 10: ...The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me he doeth the works.

(c) Mark x. 17, 18, John xiii. 4—17.

(d) Luke ii. 49. John ix. 4.

(e) See Part First, Chap. IV. Sect. II.

(f) John xi. 42: Jesus lifted up [his] eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people who stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

(g) Exod. xiv. 21; xvii. 6.

(h) 2 Kings, iv. 32—35.

(i) John xiv. 12: He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater [works] than these he shall do, because I go unto my Father.—(See also Mat. xvii. 20, 21; Mark xvi. 17—20. Acts iii. 1—8; v. 15; ix. 36—41; xiv. 8—10; xix. 12. xx. 9—12; xxviii. 3—6.)

(k) 2 Kings v. 10: And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, *Go and wash in Jordan seven times*, and thy flesh shall come again to thee and thou shalt be clean.—Ver. 27: The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper [as white] as snow. (See also Chap. ii. 10.)

(l) Mark iv. 41: ...What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him!—(See also John vii. 46.)

(m) John vi. 14: Then these men, when they had seen the miracles that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. (See also Chap. ix. 17.)

(n) Luke vii. 16: And there came a fear on all; and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up amongst us, &c.—Chap. xxiv. 19: Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet mighty in deed and word before God, and all the people.

(o) John iii. 2: Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

(p) Mat. ix. 8: When the multitude saw [it], they glorified God, who had given such power unto men.

(q) John xi. 24, 27.

(r) John xi. 21, 22: Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give [it thee.]

(s) Acts ii. 22: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs; which God did by him, as ye yourselves also know.—(See also Acts x. 38.)

(t) Mat. xxvi. 53. John xx. 30, 31.



*Observations.*

28—30. The *peculiar manner* in which our Lord performed miracles, is alleged as a proof of inherent and underived power. But did Jesus himself claim this prerogative? Did he calm the tempest, heal the sick, and raise the dead, in order to evince the energies of omnipotence? No: he appealed to these and other astonishing works, merely as indications of his divine mission—of his having been indeed sent by the Father (*a*). He expressly affirmed, that it was the Father, who dwelt in him, that did the works (*b*); and it is highly reasonable to infer, from his unaffected humility (*c*), and his entire devotedness to the will of God (*d*)—from the often-repeated prayers and ascriptions of praise which he presented to the Father (*e*), and particularly from the simple expression of pious gratitude which he manifested at the tomb of his friend Lazarus (*f*), that he did not perform a single miracle without first making a devout, though perhaps mental acknowledgment of the infinite superiority of his God and Father.

It is admitted that Christ's miracles were not, in their own nature, more difficult to perform than those of the prophets and apostles. Moses divided the Red Sea, and produced water from a barren rock (*g*); Elisha restored a dead child to life (*h*); and Peter and Paul, and other disciples of Christ, wrought miracles not inferior to those of their Lord and Master (*i*). The power, too, by which the prophets performed their miraculous works, was unquestionably the gift of God; and yet we find that, like the Saviour, they did not, in the performance of *every* miracle, audibly use the name of Jehovah (*k*).

It is certain, that the attendants on Christ's ministry, were not of opinion that the power which he manifested was almighty. They considered him merely as an extraordinary man (*l*); as a prophet (*m*)—a mighty prophet (*n*)—who could not have performed the wonderful works which they witnessed, unless God had been with him (*o*). In the fulness of their grateful hearts, some of them thanked Heaven for having bestowed such beneficent powers on a human being (*p*). One of his female friends, a sister of Lazarus, who seems to have had more ample knowledge of his Messiahship than was enjoyed by any of his disciples (*q*), expressed her conviction, that if he had been present her brother would not have died—not on the grounds of his being the Supreme God, but of his being the Christ, the Son of God; and her language evidently implies, that she considered Jesus as having the ability to restore the deceased to life, not because he possessed inherent and independent power, but because she knew that his pious and benevolent requests would be granted by his Father (*r*). St. Peter, who had been one of the constant followers of Jesus, who had been a witness of the mighty works that he performed, and who had repeatedly heard his authoritative and gracious declarations, asserted, after the ascension of his Master—at a time when he was plentifully endowed with the gift of inspiration—that God *did* miracles, and wonders, and signs, *by* (or through) Jesus of Nazareth (*s*).

The peculiar manner, then, in which Jesus suspended the laws of nature, indicates merely that he was, as a Messenger from God vastly superior to all other prophets and divine teachers; that, his authority being of a higher and more important kind, he was invested by his heavenly Father with a voluntary power of working miracles; that he was, in fine, the long-expected Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world (*t*).\*

\* As the Author designs to print his work in octavo, he will be enabled to employ a larger type than that which is used in these extracts.

# OBJECTIONS TO UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY CONSIDERED.

BY W. E. CHANNING. D. D.

---

It is due to truth, and a just deference to our fellow Christians, to take notice of objections which are currently made to our particular views of religion ; nor ought we to dismiss such objections, as unworthy of attention, on account of their supposed lightness, because what is light to us may weigh much with our neighbour, and truth may suffer from obstructions which a few explanations might remove. It is to be feared that those Christians who are called Unitarian, have been wanting in this duty. Whilst they have met the laboured arguments of their opponents fully and fairly they have overlooked the loose, vague, indefinite objections which float through the community, and operate more on common minds than formal reasoning. On some of these objections remarks will now be offered ; and it is hoped that our plainness of speech will not be construed into severity, nor our strictures on different systems be ascribed to a desire of retaliation. It cannot be expected that we shall repel with indifference what seem to us reproaches on some of the most important and consoling views of Christianity. Believing that the truths, which, through God's good providence, we are called to maintain, are necessary to the vindication of the divine character, and to the prevalence of a more enlightened and exalted piety, we are bound to assert them earnestly, and to speak freely of the opposite errors which now disfigure Christianity.—What, then, are the principal objections to Unitarian Christianity ?

1. It is objected to us that we deny the divinity of Jesus Christ. Now, what does this objection mean ? What are we to understand by the divinity of Christ ? In the sense in which many Christians, and, perhaps, a majority, interpret it, we do not deny it, but believe it as firmly as themselves. We believe firmly in the divinity of Christ's mission and office, that he spoke with divine authority, and was a bright image of the divine perfections. We believe that God dwelt in him, manifested himself through him, taught men by him, and communicated to him his spirit without measure. We believe that Jesus Christ was the most glorious display, expression, and representative of God to mankind, so that in seeing and knowing him, we see and know the invisible Father ; so that, when Christ came, God visited the world and dwelt with men more conspicuously than at any former period. In Christ's words we hear God speaking ; in his miracles we behold God acting ; in his character and life we see an unsullied image of God's purity and love. We believe, then, in the divinity of Christ, as this term is often and properly used.—How, then, it may be asked, do we differ from other Christians ? We differ in this important respect. Whilst we honour Christ as the son, representative, and image of the Supreme God, we do not believe him to be the Supreme God himself. We maintain, that Christ and God are *distinct beings*, two beings, not one and the same being. On this point a little repetition may be pardoned, for many good Christians, after the controversies of ages, misunderstand the precise difference between us and themselves.

Trinitarianism teaches that Jesus Christ is the Supreme and Infinite God, and that he and his father are not only one in affection, counsel, and will, but are strictly and literally one and the same being. Now, to us this doctrine is most unscriptural and irrational. We say that the Son cannot be the same being with his own Father; that he, who was sent into the world to save it, cannot be the living God who sent him. The language of Jesus is explicit and unqualified. 'I came not to do mine own will.'—'I came not from myself.' 'I came from God.' Now we affirm, and this is our chief heresy, that Jesus was not and could not be the God from whom he came, but was another being; and it amazes us that any can resist this simple truth. The doctrine that Jesus who was born at Bethlehem; who eat and drank, and slept; who suffered and was crucified; who came from God; who prayed to God; who did God's will; and who said, on leaving the world, 'I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God; the doctrine that this Jesus was the Supreme God himself, and the same being with his Father;—this seems to us a contradiction to reason and scripture so flagrant, that the simple statement of it is a sufficient refutation. We are often charged with degrading Christ; but if this reproach belong to any Christians, it falls, we fear, on those who accuse him of teaching a doctrine so contradictory, and so subversive of the supremacy of our heavenly Father. Certainly, our humble and devout Master has given no ground for this accusation. He always expressed towards God the reverence of a son. He habitually distinguished himself from God. He referred to God all his powers. He said without limitation or reserve, 'The Father is greater than I.'—'Of myself I can do nothing.' If to represent Christ as a being distinct from God, and as inferior to him, be to degrade him, then let our opponents lay the guilt where it belongs, not on us, but on our Master, whose language we borrow, in whose very words we express our sentiments, whose words we dare not trifle with and force from their plain sense. Our limits will not allow us to say more; but we ask common Christians, who have taken their opinions from the Bible rather than from human systems, to look honestly into their own minds, and to answer frankly, whether they have not understood and believed Christ's divinity in the sense maintained by us, rather than in that for which the Trinitarians contend.

*(To be continued.)*

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

---

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—Having seen, in your last number, a letter from Mr. Mitchell, stating that he purposes to write a series of letters in reference to a small book of mine on his sermons; I beg to know if you will undertake to allow me room, in your publication, for letters in reply to his. I suppose, if you accede to this, that a let-

ter would appear each month, *alternately from each*. Will you favour me with you answer to this.—I am, Sir, your obedient,  
DANIEL BAGOT, *Newry*.

[ANSWER TO MR. BAGOT'S LETTER.]

THE conductors of the Bible Christian, will consent to give insertion to any temperate letters in reply to Mr. Mitchel, on condition—that the quantity shall not exceed eight pages of print in every number—that the communications shall be furnished a full fortnight before the day of publication—that if Mr. Bagot's letters shall be published in any other periodical without being accompanied by Mr. Mitchel's, the conductors shall be at liberty to discontinue the insertion of them—and that they shall have the option of putting a stop to the correspondence on both sides, after a reasonable time and on giving one month's notice.

IF the Correspondent who sends us an extract from a Sermon by a Remonstrant Minister, wishes to ascertain the correctness of his quotation, he can easily do so by applying to the reverend Preacher.

We have received a very interesting account of the proceedings of the Moneyrea congregation, which we shall probably insert in an early number.

Will the Correspondent who addresses his letter to Eugenius, favour us with an extract of the passage on which he comments?

Articles have been received from Aleph and Q., for which at present we have not room. The subject discussed by the latter writer, has been treated by two other correspondents.

OBITUARY.

DIED, on 27th of March, Miss Stevenson, aged 77.

ERRATA.

- Page 66, line 29, for *compose*, read *embrace*.  
— 67, ..... 26, ... *frantic*, ..... *fanatic*.  
— 69, .. ... 20, ... *reporting*, ..... *refuting*.  
— do. .... 42, ... *families*, ..... *fanatics*.

In Mr. Mitchell's letter, p. 80, twelfth line from foot, for *he then*, read *in them he*,—p. 82, l. 17, for *deign*, read *design*,—p. 82, l. 24, for *correct*, read *connect*.

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

---

No. IV.

MAY, 1832.

VOL. III.

---

HINTS TO ANONYMOUS WRITERS.

THE courtesy due from one anonymous writer to another is a Branch of Minor Morals, which has not received the consideration that it deserves. I know not whether it has ever been treated of expressly. I shall, therefore, offer a few observations on this subject, with a particular view to religious controversy.

The greater part of English literature, is the work of nameless authors. The numerous classes of Pamphlets and Periodicals in particular, are with few exceptions, supplied by anonymous contributors. Of these the Theological are most numerous and most controversial, and as the writers are either leaders or partisans of different sects and parties, the spirit with which they write must have a sensible effect on the temper and manners of society. The continued fluttering, buzzing and stinging of these insects, must keep up a feverish irritation, and effectually banish repose.

A spirit of urbanity is still more beneficial, and the want of it more injurious to the writer than to the public. While he retains this spirit, he is the more likely to arrive at truth, and to profit by the observations of his correspondents; but the indulgence of rudeness, arrogance, and petulance, will degrade the lover of truth, into a partisan of error, and the candid reasoner, into an unprincipled sophist. In personal disputes, this perverseness may be palliated by the influence of rivalry and pride of understanding; or passion for victory, and mortification at defeat; and the fear of sinking in the estimation of the company; but what excuse or extenuation can we devise for anonymous disputants? And yet these unknown and invisible combatants, display as much ill humour, chagrin and bitterness, as if they were insulted and exposed to ridicule by some malignant rival, or inveterate enemy. What folly can we compare with this folly? We may liken it to a scuffle among a company of blind men, dealing



their blows at random, and wounding their dearest friends. On these occasions, those mysterious, nameless personages, the Editors often issue from their secret retreat, and mingle in the affray; and oft-times presuming, that the whole world is deeply interested in their private feelings and petty feuds, carry on bitter and protracted hostilities among themselves, to the great disgust and annoyance of their readers.

From the acrimony with which anonymous writers are often assailed, they would seem to be suspected of some sinister design, in concealing their names; but no suspicion can be more unjust and injurious; for they are, for the most part, influenced by innocent and amiable motives. Many very intelligent and intellectual men, well qualified to instruct and entertain the public, are so sensitive by nature, that they would be alarmed at the thought of seeing their names in print; and therefore, send their literary offspring into the world without any mark, that might denote their parentage. These modest foundlings may surely expect to be received with kindness and treated with tenderness.

Others write for their own amusement, or for the entertainment of their friends, and are indifferent, whether or not, their names be known beyond that circle. These have no love for literary fame, or think, that their names would add nothing to their works, or their works to their names. They accordingly prefer a fictitious signature, by which their pieces may be recognised by their acquaintance. As these look for so little praise, they may hope to be exempt from censure.

Some may indulge a taste for ludicrous composition without violating the rules of urbanity or delicacy; or may think that serious subjects may be handled in a lively sportive strain, to more advantage, and less offence or provocation, than in a grave and disputatious vein; though this may not accord with their station, or general line of conversation. They may therefore think an adopted name would be a more suitable appendage to their essays than their own. We are warranted by high critical authority, to say, that grave and important questions may sometimes be decided more effectually and agreeably by pleasantry than by keen disputation or logical reasoning.

Some wish to excite amicable discussion upon an edifying subject, with a view to gain information or instruction, and select an appropriate appellation, by which they may be addressed by their correspondents; and thus acquire knowledge without exposing their ignorance.

The object of the occasional writer may be calmly to recommend some edifying truth, or modestly correct a dangerous error. He therefore, withholds his real name; hoping, too often vainly hoping, to avoid collision with a rude antagonist.

To these reasons for anonymous writing may be added the *cacoethes scribendi*, or itch for scribbling, which is much encouraged by this practice.

Divines who most frequently cloak themselves in this disguise, are actuated by various motives,—some, perhaps, by an apprehension, that the authority of their names might add too much weight to their opinions on controverted questions. These instances I fear, are rare. Others, no doubt, who are not so confident of their influence on society, may shun the charge of vanity in pretending to it. This I confess, is also a case of rare occurrence. Some writers on Theology give way, though not very becomingly to a satirical humour. These sometimes assume a mask, lest they should excite resentment, and fall into trouble. Lastly, there are men who scorn to resort to any of these apologies, but adopt this expedient that they may with impunity vent their spleen against opinions and individuals whom they would not dare to encounter face to face; and to inculcate their prejudices into the minds of the vulgar, without betraying their ignorance. These often envelop themselves in this disguise, that from it they may wing the shafts of malice in security, dipping their barbs in the venom of slander. “*Pudet hæc opprobria NOBIS (clericis,) et dici potuisse, & non potuisse refelli.*”

I shall now close this paper with a few rules, which I recommend to the consideration of my nameless brethren. An anonymous writer should act as becomes a gentleman. Now, a gentleman, is a man, who respects himself. He will neither say nor do any thing under a disguise, that he would not openly avow. He will preserve the same regard for truth, candour and civility, as if he were addressing another gentleman in his proper person. He will never screen himself under

a false name, to countenance falsehood, or belie truth. A man of nice honour will be even more ashamed of giving currency to a calumny or base insinuation through a secret channel, than in personal disputation. If one be conscious of being a hypocrite, a calumniator, and a deceiver, and is content to contemplate himself in this character in private, he cannot take offence at being treated as such in public.

This respect, the anonymous author owes to himself; but he thinks himself entitled to use less ceremony with the public. In particular, he claims a right of taking unlimited freedom with public men and their measures. It is a delicate matter to interfere with this privilege. I shall therefore, only advise him to avoid that vulgar ribaldry and scurrility, which is so discreditable to himself, nauseous to all well bred people, and despicable as well as provoking in the eyes of the persons to whom they are applied. This however, relates chiefly to political affairs; and I refer to them only as they are sometimes connected with matters of religion or education. My subject confines me to the courtesy, which these writers should practise among themselves. If their names and persons be mutually unknown to each other, there is no point upon which their incivility can be displayed, except their understanding, as developed in their compositions. This is slippery ground upon which a strong man may meet with a heavy fall. I have known an author, who had been assaulted in a most contemptuous and insolent manner, suddenly to obtain a decided triumph over his presumptuous assailant, as to learning and argument, temper and style.

In the combatant, who fights under false colours and borrowed names, the indulgence of those discourteous feelings is peculiarly absurd as well as shameful. The utmost that he can expect from such ungentlemanly conduct, is to irritate or mortify some unknown person, who may be actuated by as fair and honourable principles as himself; and may in fact, be his own particular friend. If he flatters himself that he has gained the advantage, he triumphs over nobody; but has obtained a barren victory under an inglorious character. If one of the parties suspects, that he knows the other, it is the height of rudeness as well as indiscretion to vent rash suspicions or attempt to violate his privacy. This is

true, though the real name be discovered by unquestionable marks. When persons, who suspect, or detect their adversaries, meet in public or private, it is a gross violation of delicacy, to exhibit any sign of recognition. They should exchange civilities, and join in conversation, like other strangers. If they turn out to be old acquaintances, no allusion should ever be made in company, to their literary differences, nor if possible, to the subject of their argument. This forbearance will be required in an eminent degree, if their controversy be accidentally introduced by others. In short, they should correspond as strangers, and converse like gentlemen.

These rules demand the attention of all sects and parties; for they are transgressed by the dogmatical, in compliance with their prejudices, and by the liberal in opposition to their principles. I beg leave to subjoin one hint to readers. It is equally indelicate and imprudent, especially in small societies, to be inquisitive about the true names of anonymous writers; for this is a great discouragement to a free and beneficial communication of knowledge, and interchange of sentiment.

ERASMUS.

---

#### TO BIBLE CHRISTIAN STUDENTS.

To those who properly understand the awful responsibility connected with the office of a Christian Minister, it is quite unnecessary to preface the present address with an apology; none, therefore, shall be offered. I, a BIBLE CHRISTIAN, speak to every rational, thinking student,—who, rejecting the interpretations of fallible men, is desirous of preserving the Holy Scriptures in their purity, free from, and unshackled by creeds and confessions, which an impious, an unhallowed bigotry, would force upon those, who labour at all times, to approve themselves “freemen in Christ.” I ask not whether you be Trinitarian or Unitarian; the sole bond of union recognized by us, as far as relates to doctrine, consists in an acknowledgement of THE BIBLE, as the *only*, but *all sufficient* rule of Faith and Practice. Some Students, now avowedly in connexion with the

General Synod, are meditating a departure from that body: to these I equally address myself, as to those who have already joined us. My object is, to remind each of you, at once of the *evils*, and of the *advantages* that as "a Bible Christian" await him, so that no one may unite with us, prompted by hopes that cannot possibly be fulfilled. Some may, indeed fear, lest by my present step, I damp the spirits, and discourage the hearts of those, who, longing for their Bible, are eager to leave the profitless pages of the Confession of Faith; but for this I care nothing. If any can be deterred by fears of future, worldly evil, from avowing themselves openly, and honestly, they had better, far better, be elsewhere than existing in our fellowship.

The religious body,—which you either have joined, or are about to join, my friends—is backed neither by the power, nor by the sympathies of the world: on the contrary, it is exposed to every injury that malice can inflict, and to every insult and calumny which its enemies can shower upon it. Its members are denied the name of Christ,—are denounced as reprobate, children of perdition, and allies to infidelity! This is the character the world bestows on us, and I would seriously inquire of you, have you duly reflected on your chances of evil in uniting yourselves to a body, thus subject to the displeasure of man—whose trust depends alone in God, and whose chief strength lies in that concord and love, which He sustains among its members. We are—blessed be the name of the Most High!—freed from the extreme persecutions wherewith true disciples, in days that are passed, have been afflicted; but still, as Bible Christians, we are deprived of all the joys, pleasures, and honours, that attend on the favourites of the world: we are subject to innumerable annoyances, inconveniences, and insults, from the intolerant malice of the ignorant, to whom our real opinions are unknown, and who judge of them, deceived and cajoled by the gross misrepresentations of men, who *profess* to be Christians. These are matters which deserve your serious attention. Remain not in your present determination, if you have been led to it by false and unfounded hopes. It does not become you to indulge in idle dreamings of prosperity, but to calculate well your liability to endure misfortune, if any, unhappily, are of a complexion to



be turned aside "from the straight and narrow way," by fears so unworthy of a Christian. Think on the laborious duties that await you, in your character of Ministers of a Church, hated by a world, whose Pharisaical pride, and hypocritical sanctity, is sternly rebuked by its Christian, its unpretending simplicity. Regard, then, the worst, the gloomy, equally with the bright side of the picture. No one ought to enter into our communion, who is not determined to lay aside all indolence, and every indulgence, that might interfere with his duties, his weighty duties, in this our day of trouble; in an age like this, when the land from north to south, from east to west, displays one great mass of hypocrisy, of ignorance, and of superstition! These days are fruitful of danger and of suffering to him that loveth his God, and feareth Him rather than man: let none, then, aspire to the holy calling of Advocates for the Bible, who are not fully determined to reject all hope of honour, or riches, or popularity, rather than relax in their endeavours to extend, among men, a reception of the great truth, that "the only authority in matters of Faith is, the Word of God." The observance of this principle, we firmly believe, can alone lead to true, but unpretending religion among men. Would but the self-styled ORTHODOX be consistent, how gladly would we unite with them in acclamations for "*the Bible, the whole Bible, and NOTHING BUT THE BIBLE!*" Alas, how different is their language from their conduct!

Such, Christian Students, such then, are the troubles that certainly await you; many arising out of the serious duties of your office; but still more from the hatred, and the rancour of your misguided brethren. There are, however, a few happy circumstances that to an honest Christian, may appear sufficient to counterbalance them, and which may induce him, despising consequences, to remain in that "liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." To these I shall briefly allude; then let the measures of good and evil be carefully weighed, and act as the fear of the world, or your religious principles may prevail.

Your peculiar advantage as BIBLE CHRISTIANS, is a consequence of the fundamental principle on which the constitution of our Church depends,—the rejection of any formula, that might have a tendency, direct or

indirect, to cramp or bias the mind, in its search for Gospel truth. You can, with confidence, look forward to a union with truly Christian men, who, preferring an acknowledged difference of opinion, to a hypocritical, and time-serving *uniformity* of belief, dare not call upon you to subscribe to any standard of theirs; but rest contented with putting the word of God into your hands, and with imploring you to study it diligently, with prayer for assistance to HIM “that desireth truth in the inward parts.” If this mode of action cannot *finally* produce a true, an unfeigned uniformity among Christians, we are acquainted with no effectual means by which it can be attained. How happy then, my friends, are you in this respect! You are not, in consequence, and as an *unavoidable* consequence of a change in your religious opinions, liable to an expulsion from our communion, only granting that your opinions be in unison with the Scripture confession,—assent to which before his baptism, Philip demanded of the Eunuch,—that “Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” While you acknowledge Him as the sole King and Head of the Church, even so long will you be entitled to remain with us, unrestrained in a free exercise of the faith prescribed to you by your conscience, as the result of a careful inquiry, and a fearless, but candid investigation.

There is one other source of happiness and comfort, that will ever attend you, in your character of Bible Christians, which is peculiarly worthy of attention. Unlike the members of a Church that ties her Ministers down to some peculiar creed, you will have no cause to act a dishonest part,—to feign a belief in doctrines which you consider contrary to the teaching of the word of God. Hence, your hearts will be at peace, and in consequence of a strict adherence to your religious principles, conscience will ever stand a faithful friend. As Bible Christians, you will most certainly have to struggle hard; almost single-handed you will be opposed to the violence and rancour of men, prompted to unkindness by *zeal* for Religion! and to a *misrepresentation* of our truly Protestant principles, by LOVE for the Church of Christ! And yet, such men are the teachers of the people in sacred things,—in subjects that pertain to Eternity!

Consider, then, whether a good conscience will suffice, not merely to detain you with us, but see also, whether it will avail in serious trouble, and distress of mind or body, or outward estate, to prevent your lagging in the cause of truth, and yielding tamely to those obstacles that most surely await all such as regulate not their conduct by the vain suggestions of the worldly-minded. Believe me, in enlisting under the banner of that Church, which denies all religious authorities but the Scriptures of God, and which rejects all Masters spiritual, save *Christ*, you are not entering into a city, where a refuge is found from the afflictions of the world; you are rather betaking yourselves to one of sure foundation, but of apparent weakness, which the terrors of darkness and of hell—which the might of the world, and the superstitions thereof, are leagued together to destroy. The Rock of the Church is immoveable, but its defenders must suffer much before the enemy can be defeated; which, by the grace of God, will surely be the termination! Then will the Church rise triumphant from the state of depression in which she is now placed,—then will Religion be the healer, pouring balm on the angry passions of men, and causing the nations to dwell together in peace. In your labours to bring about this happy state of things, you will further be consoled at all times, and in every circumstance by the reflection, that in joining with us you are freed from the charge of hypocrisy. Did the mask and shrouding veil, sit easy on you, you would never have left that which is loved, and supported so warmly by man, for that ZION where we trust the Lord is tabernacled,—where we pray, the Spirit of Christ may ever dwell, to give that peace, and happiness, and mutual affection which in more prosperous days have been denied.

Let no one, then, join our Church, who has not calmly considered the troubles and disadvantages, as well as the good, that awaits him; and who has not resolved in good, and in evil, to continue firm to his Religion, and to his Religious principles. And if, as I feel confident will be the case, you determine on abiding by us, trusting in that God who has promised his presence and his rest to every faithful servant, it becomes you to begin as you must end your glorious profession. You must act determinately, and without the slightest ap-

pearance of vacillation. Let there be, in face of all men, and despite of consequences, *even now*, a manly, and candid avowal of your opinions. Some,—whether they do so or not in reality, I cannot presume to say,—but some certainly appear to dread this. Allow me, however, to declare to you, it can answer no good end to conceal any portion of the truth. If you can *truly* believe the Bible Christians to be *erroneous* in their principles, then openly, and in every circumstance, declare this as your opinion; remain under the care of the General Synod, and cease—above all, cease your *professions* of liberality,—professions in accordance with which you dare not act, and which serve but to deceive. But if you think, that we have justice and truth, and the grand principles of Protestantism on our side, why, in such circumstances, remain longer undecided? Let your religion and your honour speak; let the warning voice be heard, and dare to act worthily of yourselves, by an immediate, an unreserved declaration of your views. Then will a character be given you, for integrity and openness of heart, which having been merited, will not be transitory in its effects, but, attended by the approbation of all good men, of every sect and every denomination of Christians, and much more, by the happiness which never departs from a peaceful conscience, will have a strong influence upon each succeeding action of your lives. Every religious and moral principle will receive tenfold strength to lead you in the path of virtue, far away from the polluted regions of dishonour and hypocrisy. Pursue *now*, as you would hereafter wish yourselves to have done, the straight-forward, the honest, the Christian course. It is at all times the shortest—it is the only one which can insure a peaceful life, or support and cheer, when the messenger of God is about to convey us to another (may it be a happier!) state of existence.

Think, then, on all these subjects; they are worthy of your attention. May the Holy Spirit be with you, to guide you in the right way, and enable you to discern accurately between good and evil.

ALEPH.

## THE PASTOR OBERLIN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—Permit me to offer to you the following little memorial of the opinions of Oberlin, pastor of the Ban de la Roche, from the third edition of his life just published in London. The work in which it is contained, is well worthy the attention of your readers, as affording the delightful picture of a man whose whole life was a tissue of benevolence and unfeigned piety.

“He (Oberlin) seemed to hope that the passage, first Cor. xv. 28, where it is said that ‘all things shall be subjected to the Almighty, and the Son also himself shall be subjected, that God may be all in all,’ might include not only the little flock of Christ’s immediate followers, but ultimately, at some almost indefinite period, through the boundless mercy of God and the blood of Jesus, which was shed for the sins of the *whole* world, *all* the race of mankind. And he was strengthened in this belief by understanding in another than the ordinary sense, that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive.”

Mem. of Oberlin, 3d edition, p. 232. London, 1831.

I give the preceding Sir, without note or comment, as adding another illustrious name to the long list of those who have professed this *true* and merciful tenet. I am, Sir, your obedient servant, A.

TO THE REV. SHADOW-FIGHTERS OF BELFAST  
AND DUBLIN.

GENTLEMEN,—On what ground do you shadow-fighters of the present day, object to the Plan of the Education Committee? Is it because that Plan excludes the Scriptures from schools? No—for the Scriptures are not thereby excluded from schools. Is it because they occupy less of the school hours than formerly? No—they are to occupy much more of the school-hours than they did thirty years since; and even more than the Kildare-street schools did, or were required to do. Is it because making selections out of the Scriptures, depreciates the *unselected* portions? No—for the selec-



tions being made of the most intelligible, and least controversial portions, are the best adapted for youth, and for schools attended by *different sects*; the unselected parts, being reserved for more mature minds, at home, or for their pastor's explanation at separate hours. Besides, are not many chapters concerning Jewish rites, purifications, and Hebrew proper names &c. omitted in the teaching of children? And is not the omitting of these making a selection, only on a larger scale? And did not the Kildare-street committee, that has been so much lauded above the present, adopt the very same Plan of selecting what was most level to the capacities, and to the acceptance of all, the young, the dull, and the prejudiced? And pray, reverend alarmists, what are your prayer books, manuals, and confessions of faith, but Scripture selections, and selections too by fallible men? True—they are interlarded with human compositions; but surely they are not improved by this intermixture. You do then what you reprobate us for doing; you will have the whole Scriptures. You do more, you mix it up with human dress, and thus attempt to amend the perfect law, the divine work of God, with the imperfect work of man. Now the Education Committee do not mix up the Scriptures with other religious works, but merely bind them together in the same book. You also bind the candidates for the ministry to profess their belief in these human creeds, without which *profession*, you refuse holy orders to those that offer to subscribe the Scriptures as the word of God. You require Scripture selections, then, in requiring creeds, partly made up of such selections, and yet you reprobate Scripture selections. Where is the shadow of consistency in such conduct?

And see how much time will be devoted to religion! Certainly not less than the one-half of the scholars' time will be occupied by Scripture reading and religious exercises, under the direction of their pastors and teachers. And this is much more than has been devoted to religion for centuries past.

You reprobate selections, and of course you reprobate human creeds, that ought to be chiefly made up of Scripture selections. You insist on human creeds in your own churches; and yet you object to your Roman

Catholic brethren having creeds, notes or comments, as poisoning the minds of the Protestant children.

Query—Is it not the fear of losing the loaves and fishes, that has spread the present alarm? On examining your own hearts, is there not a spirit of monopoly, passive obedience, a desire to lord it over men's consciences, and to jostle your brethren out of their small livings, and for these purposes to join the silver-smiths at Ephesus in their cry—"great is Diana of the Ephesians?" Great is the common prayer book, great is the confession of faith, great is the union of church and state, great is the union of Presbytery and Prelacy!

Q.

---

#### VINDICATION OF THE UNITY OF GOD.

IN my last, I brought under review some of Mr. Bagot's incoherent statements in reference to the Persons of the Trinity: I now proceed to take a similar notice of several others.

He endeavours to establish a distinction between the "*abstract circumstances*," and the "*official character*" of the three Persons, by which he hopes to obviate many difficulties. Let us see, In page 131 he has the following observation:—"In reference to the abstract circumstances of the Divine Being, we conceive that the Scriptures afford us ample evidence of the *perfect equality* of the three Persons:"—"whereas, (he observes in page 136,) in their official character, they perform distinct offices, and consequently sustain distinct characters, which *cannot be indifferently predicated of all*." Now, if this latter observation be correct, as unquestionably it is, an intelligent reader will wonder how it might be reconciled with the former; and he will naturally ask, what must become of the "*perfect equality* of the three Persons?" It must, I think, be quite plain to an ordinary capacity, that persons cannot be "*perfectly equal*," of whom the same things cannot be "*indifferently predicated*;" which is just as great a truism as to say that they are not equal, unless they are equal. But, according to Mr. Bagot, and indeed according to Scripture, these Three Persons "perform distinct offi-

ces, and consequently sustain distinct characters, which *cannot be indifferently predicated of all* ;” therefore, by his own showing, and of necessity, *they cannot be “equal.”*

But what does Mr. Bagot mean by “this difference betwixt the abstract and official character of the Three Persons?” Or where has he been able to discover this difference? It cannot, I think, have been in the Scripture : for so far as my knowledge of Scripture extends the terms which he has here employed, as well as the ideas conveyed by them, are equally unknown to the Bible. The mission and office of the Son of God, the Mediator, together with those of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, have indeed been plainly enough revealed to us in the Gospel ; but I confess, I have not been able to discover there any clear account of their “*abstract nature or character.*” And as to any such “difference between the *abstract character*, and the *official manifestation*,” of the Great Father of all, I should not presume to form any conception, as the Holy Scriptures are perfectly silent on the subject. The Bible teaches me to regard the living and true God as One, indivisible, unchangeable Being. Its uniform declarations are such as these—“God is *One*,”—“there is no God beside me,”—he is without variableness or shadow of turning.” But, according to the Trinitarian scheme, we are given to understand that God consists of “three distinct Persons ;” that each of these three persons sustains *two different characters*, an *abstract* and an *official* ; that the original and abstract character has, for the time, been laid aside, or at least left in abeyance, each assuming distinct characters and new relations with respect to the others ; that in these new relations they severally perform offices and acts so perfectly distinct, that what is performed by one cannot be said to be performed by another ;—that “the Father (according to Mr. Bagot, though this term he says, is not always used as the distinguishing title of the first Person,) is manifested as holding the rank of President, “even in these official manifestations” and new relations of the Trinity ;—and that, accordingly, “the Son and Holy Ghost are *now* subordinate to the Father.” Can this be the one, indivisible, unchangeable God of the Bible? Why the metamorphoses of the Heathen Gods themselves were scarcely more at variance with the

teaching of Divine Revelation. And yet Mr. Bagot, in conjunction with all Trinitarians, contends for the *essential unity* of these three Persons, so distinct in their characters and offices; and declares that “the Scriptures afford us ample evidence of their *perfect equality*!” He seems, indeed, as tho’ he reckoned himself privileged to declare any thing and every thing,—no matter how much it may be at variance with scripture, and with himself. It seems unnecessary to point out to any discerning mind the total inconsistency of *unity* with *equality*. These two ideas are absolutely incompatible. It is a perfect truism to say that one object cannot be compared with itself: and it must be an equal truism to say that any *three objects* so distinct as to admit of comparison with each other, cannot be the *same object*.

But let us try the doctrine of the “*perfect equality* of the three Persons”—first by the declarations of that Creed to which Mr. Bagot has given his solemn assent and consent; and then by the disclosures of divine revelation. It may here be proper to premise,—that no two or more objects can with any propriety be said to be “perfectly equal,” unless the very same things may with truth and without limitation, be “indifferently predicated” of them,—that is, that the same names, qualities, circumstances, relations, and entire descriptions may, without exception, and with equal correctness, be applied to any of them. Now, Mr. Bagot himself has laid it down, that the *names* of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost cannot be indifferently ascribed to the three Persons of the Trinity, because these “designate their distinct personality.” They are not, therefore, “*equal*” in *name*, according to his own declaration. Nor are they “*equal*” in *nature*, even by the declarations of the Athanasian Creed:—for that creed tells us “The Father is made of none; neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created, but *begotten*. The Holy Ghost is of the Father, *and of the Son*; neither made nor created, nor begotten, but *proceeding*.” Where, I ask, is the “perfect equality” of three Persons, of whom such things as these are affirmed? Yet the same creed declares that we are “compelled by the christian verity, to acknowledge every person, *by himself*, to be God:—the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.” Here, then,

are three distinct Persons,—of whom the first is unbegotten, *undervived in any sense* whatsoever, the origin and Father of all :—of whom the second is “*begotten of the Father alone,*”—*derived* from him in some way or other: and of whom the third, tho’ *not begotten*, is yet in some sense *derived* from the first and second Persons, which is simply expressed as “proceeding from the Father and the Son.” Yet, with all these *admitted and essential distinctions*, we are called upon to believe—at once in the “unity,” and in the “perfect equality,” of these three Persons! I shall not insult Mr. Bagot, by asking him how *he* can believe in all this;—for he has *sworn* he believes it, and must in some way or other have been able to satisfy his own mind : but I will ask any man of common sense and common honesty, who is unfettered by subscription to human articles and human creeds—first, whether, even on the terms of the Athanasian creed, he can by possibility persuade himself of the “perfect equality”, of the Persons therein described as above? Or secondly, supposing him persuaded of the perfect equality of the three *distinct* Persons, how he can bring himself to believe, or to conceive, that they are all three but one and the same Being? He may shut his eyes, and seal up his mind against the light of common sense. He may profess to believe in an absolute paradox, and exclaim—“*credo, quia impossibile est :*”—but it is as plain as the sun at noonday, that if in any intelligible sense, he believe *any one* of the preceding propositions, he cannot consistently admit *the other*. If the three Persons be “perfectly equal,” and if we must “acknowledge every person, *by himself*, to be God;” then there can be no more direct violation of all consistency and common sense than to assert, that they are all but *one God*. And the utter impossibility of reconciling these incongruous ideas has driven many, on the one side, into the Sabellian error,—which teaches that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are but different names of the same Being, without any such distinction of Persons; and many, on the other side, into absolute Tritheism, or the belief in three Gods; which, notwithstanding the clumsy and contradictory declarations of the Athanasian Creed, is, after all, the doctrine which it inculcates. Among others, the celebrated Dr. Sherlock, a Bishop of the English Church, was



so sensible of this incongruity, that he honestly confessed it impossible, to “acknowledge every person *by himself*, to be God,” and yet deny the existence of three Gods. And if Mr. Bagot were not so bent on enforcing the conflicting determinations of this incongruous creed, he must feel himself compelled to make a similar confession.

But Mr. Bagot’s doctrine of the “perfect equality” of the Persons, is not only at open variance thus with a portion of his avowed creed, it is still more so with the plain and uniform teaching of Holy Scripture. So far as the creed is concerned we have seen that the same things cannot be “indifferently predicated of all;” and this with direct reference to what he calls their “abstract condition and character.” Let us now see whether we do not come to the same results when we look into the Bible. I do not mean, at present, to go into any lengthened enumeration of scripture authorities upon this point. These will more properly be brought forward at another stage of my progress: But I shall now point out, in a few examples, a simple and satisfactory mode of bringing this doctrine of “perfect equality” to the test of scripture. Let the reader take any passage of scripture he pleases, wherein the different Persons are spoken of, and without any reference to what is denominated their “official manifestation;” and let him see whether he can, with propriety, exchange the names and circumstances of the Persons as might undoubtedly be done on the supposition of their “perfect equality.” Take, for example, those words of our Saviour, (John 3-35) “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.” How will it do to change the Persons and to say—“The Son hath given all things into the Father’s hand?” This transposition at once, produces a startling declaration, which every one must feel as being at complete variance with scripture. But, if what is said of the one cannot, consistently with scripture, be said of the other, what comes of the doctrine of “perfect equality?” It might be expected that such a position would not for a moment be maintained against that other unequivocal declaration of Christ, (John 14. 28.) “The Father is greater than I.” But suppose a change of Persons, and how would it appear, had our Lord thus expressed himself,—

“I am greater than the Father?” Or take the language in which he speaks, in the next chapter, of “the Comforter,—even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father;” and, when a similar transposition is made, we should have him representing “the Father,” as proceeding from the spirit of truth.” I need not further pursue this mode of bringing the doctrine of “perfect equality” to the test of scripture:—any one may do so as largely as he pleases for himself. And in applying this test, he need not feel at all hampered by Mr. Bagot’s gratuitous distinction between the “abstract character,” and the “official manifestation” of the three Persons: for he will not meet with any such difficulty in the scriptures, which neither express a word, nor convey an idea of the kind. It is the merest fiction, contrived to prop an opinion that cannot be supported without it, and very badly even with it. Let the doctrine of the “perfect equality of the three Persons” be applied as above to the contents of the Bible, and it will be found to burlesque and mystify the entire scriptures.

One of the most singular disclosures in Mr. Bagot’s book is a declaration which he makes near the close, and which, to a reader of any discernment, cannot fail to cover his whole treatise with clouds and darkness. After manifold attempts at proving a “*plurality of persons*” in God, and after having rung the changes upon the “three *distinct persons*” of the Deity, through upwards of 160 pages of a grave work in defence of the Trinity, he comes in page 164 to make the following unexpected acknowledgment. “But it is necessary to remark, that when we use the word “Person” to express the distinction which subsists between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, *we do not intend to convey the very same idea* as when we employ it to denote the personal distinction which exists between one man and another.” And in the next page he says—“This remark should be particularly attended to, because our opponents frequently advance arguments against the doctrine of the Trinity, which are based upon an *assumed definition* of the word “Person:”—“these arguments (he adds) are to be answered by refusing to admit the accuracy of the definition, which is thus taken for granted, and by saying that *we do not use the word in its common acceptation.*” “We use it (he farther observes) because it is

a scriptural term, which occurs in Heb. 1. 3." Now, if this remark be good for any thing, it is just for turning his entire work into absolute nonsense. The entire work is designed and laboured to prove that God subsists in "three distinct *persons*;" and yet Mr. Bagot, it seems, constantly uses the word "Person" out of its "common acceptance." The common acceptance of the term is "one intelligent agent:"—but Mr. Bagot does not once favour us with his *uncommon* acceptance of it. And his concluding observation, that he uses it "because it is a scriptural term," is, to say the least of it, exceedingly disingenuous. For he knows very well, that though the term "Person" does here occur in our English translation, yet the Greek word so rendered here is *υποστασις*, which is literally and properly rendered "substance." And I repeat it, that Mr. Bagot should not have quoted it as a "scriptural term," when he knows well, that (with the exception of this mistranslation) there is not a single instance of the term "Person" having been applied to the Deity in the whole volume of the New Testament, either in the singular or plural form. How different in this respect from his own little volume, which is half made up of it! When the advocates of the Trinity feel themselves obliged, as it is obvious they do, thus to employ terms in defence and explanation of their doctrine which are not to be found in scripture, it might be expected that they would at least, employ intelligible terms, and employ them in their common acceptance! But by Mr. Bagot's acknowledgment, *they do not*. They have the effrontery to speak of God—the infinite majesty of heaven, in terms in which God has *not spoken of himself* by any of his commissioned servants; terms employed too out of their common and ordinary acceptance! Why, the late London affair of the "unknown tongues" is scarcely a grosser outrage upon common sense! And thus they are accustomed to prate, throughout entire volumes, upon the "Plurality of Persons" in the Deity, in the most mysterious, equivocal, unintelligible language; and then come in the end to say with Mr. Bagot—"We do not profess to explain its import!" "We do not use our language according to its common acceptance!" Let us hope, that when Mr. Bagot comes forth again upon this subject as he has promised, he will either learn to con-

fine the expression of his views to the plain language of sacred scripture ; or, if he shall please to employ other language, that at least he shall employ intelligible terms, and in their *common acceptance*.

Yours, &c.

J. MITCHEL.

P. S.—I rejoice, Mr. Editor, that you have so readily acceded to Mr. Bagot's request—to be allowed through your pages to reply to my letters as they may be published. This is worthy of the cause you espouse : and if this correspondence should be conducted in a temperate and proper spirit, it can scarcely fail to serve the cause of truth. And let the truth prevail, on whatever side it may stand. I have made a similar request of the Editor of the "Orthodox Presbyterian," to publish the letters consecutively on both sides,—a request which I trust will be as readily acceded to by him.

J. M.

---

### ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY A REMONSTRANT MINISTER, ON THE  
PLAN FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION.

( *Continued from page 130.* )

---

THE Commissioners are so far from wishing to banish the Bible from schools, that they have resolved to introduce as much of that sacred volume, as the pupils will conjointly receive. They propose to make such selections from Scripture, as may be pleasing to every denomination of Christians, without being objectionable to any ; and to cause those selections to be used on the four or five days of the week allotted to promiscuous and general education. This has been loudly reprobated as a daring and sacrilegious attempt to mutilate the word of God.

In order to accomplish the grand desideratum of bringing young people of different communions into kindly contact, and thus rubbing away their mutual sectarian asperities, the adoption of some such arrangement as the one contemplated, was indispensably requisite. The *entire* Bible could not be employed for indiscriminate instruction, because Christians differ as to what are, or are not, real component parts of the

Bible. Catholics maintain the divine authority of those books which are usually styled Apocryphal; High-church men, whilst they reject some of those books, practically admit others into the sacred canon; Presbyterians repudiate them all. Under such circumstances, it was necessary either to exclude the word of God entirely from schools, during the hours appropriated to ordinary and combined education, or to introduce only as much of it as Christians of every persuasion would be willing to receive; and this amounts to more, incomparably more, than most people imagine. It has been asserted, both by clerical, and by coronet-wearing declaimers, that were no extracts to be made but such as would be approved of by Catholics, the Scripture would be frittered down to a few dry and uninstructional shreds. Let the authors of this assertion read the Abstract of the Gospel, compiled by Dr. Murray and his brethren, as it may be found in the 9th Report of the former Board of Education, and then let them blush for their ignorance, or their want of candour.

Our politico-religious agitators complain of it as a most grievous hardship, that no system of *Education* is likely to receive *national support* unless it be framed so as to conciliate the co-operation of the Roman Catholic Clergy. And have those gentlemen the face to recommend, that a Plan of Education established by Government, for the benefit of the Irish poor, without exception, should be constructed on principles which would necessarily call forth the opposition of the religious guides, and shock the religious principles of at least four-fifths of the Irish people? Would it be fair to support, at the *public* expense, a scheme of instruction, which would virtually preclude a vast majority of the *public* from partaking of its advantages?

Let it not be said, that the idea of Scriptural selections for the use of schools, originated with Catholics. It originated neither with them, nor with his Majesty's present Ministers. Such selections were *unanimously* recommended by a Board of Education, formed under the auspices of the Anti-reforming Lord Liverpool; and amongst the members of this Board were three Bishops, the Provost of Trinity College, Mr. Leslie Foster, and various other persons who have never been accused of liberality. In 1825 a similar recommendation emanated



from the Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry, and in 1828 the plan was sanctioned by a Committee of the House of Commons. Extracts from the Bible, have been disseminated, not only by the Sunday-school Society, but by that very Society which the alarmists now laud to the skies : I mean the one usually called the Kildare-Street. Detached portions of the Bible, have been circulated by the Hibernian Society. Abridgments of the Bible have been printed by Sellon, Turner, Trimmer, &c. &c. And, strange to say, all these Extracts, Detached Portions, and Abridgements have been used, and highly and justly recommended, by those very persons, who are now bellowing, like bulls of Bashan, against every publication of the kind. But it must be supposed that, at the period referred to, they were in a state of political blindness, and did not foresee that a time was coming when selfish and sinister purposes might be served by a recantation of their creed.

Many of the books which I have now mentioned, have been in the hands of the common people for years past, and what is the consequence? Has the circulation of them diminished, in the slightest degree, the circulation of the *entire* word of God? No! Experience gives a decided contradiction to this prophetic assertion of the alarmists. Abridgments and Extracts, instead of tending to diminish, have always increased, and always will increase the dissemination of the Bible. The reading of a part creates a taste and a wish for a reading of the whole.

Of all declaimers against selections from Scripture as having a soul-destructive tendency, none are more vehement than clergymen of the Established Church. The shriek of jeopardy raised by them, is clearly and distinctly heard above the hoarse rumbling moan of the Presbyterian Jeremiahs. Do these sensitive gentlemen forget, that by their own canons, they are bound to rehearse every Lord's day, certain prescribed portions of Holy Writ, to which they dare not, at the peril of their livings, add a single syllable? And do they not know, that many of the books composing the Bible, are thus authoritatively prevented from being read to the people in the public ministrations of religion? Can men be sincere who act in a manner so egregiously inconsistent? Charity believeth all things, and we must do our best to believe this.

It is a maxim of the Roman Catholic faith, that as the Bible contains several passages hard to be understood, the entire volume cannot, with safety be put into the hands of the laity, unless it be accompanied by explanations and comments authorized by the Church. Most of you, my friends, will concur with me in condemning this as an erroneous principle; but however erroneous it may be, still it is a principle which is by no means peculiar to Catholics. When Bible Societies commenced their operations, we all remember the outcry which was raised by Orthodox High-Churchmen, because the Scriptures were to be distributed without note or exposition; and without being accompanied by the Book of Common Prayer, as an inseparable appendage. The late Archbishop Magee, in his testimony, given before a Committee of Parliament, denounced the dissemination of the Bible only, as a measure leading to heresy and schism, and tending to subvert the Protestant establishment. At all events, let the principle in question be ever so erroneous, still it is one which our Catholic fellow-subjects sincerely entertain, and we have no more right to make the renunciation of this, or any other article of their creed, a condition of access to the National Schools, than they would have to require our abnegation of some tenet peculiar to Protestantism. Let us do unto them, as we would that they, in similar circumstances, should do unto us. No sect is privileged to impose the slightest degree of restraint on the conscience of another.

The proposed Extracts from the Word of God, will surely have a beneficial influence so far as they go. Even small portions of the manna of life must be better than a total destitution of food from Heaven. To say that selections from the Bible should be withheld from those who are unwilling to receive the whole, is just as absurd and as wicked, as it would be to maintain, that a man who cannot be prevailed on to keep the third Commandment, or the seventh, ought, on no account, to be dissuaded from violating the whole decalogue. If a person cannot be induced to cease from swearing or fornication, does it follow that no exertion shall be made to restrain him from committing murder or perjury? It is morally certain that the contemplated selections for the use of schools, will be read by thousands of children

in many parts of Ireland, who would otherwise be reared in total ignorance of the Bible.

Had the common editions of the Scripture been proscribed by an arbitrary mandate of Government, and had the intended extracts been imposed as a substitute for the entire volume of Revelation, there would then have been cause for the panic which has been so sedulously excited. But neither of these things has been done—neither of them has been attempted—neither of them has been for one moment contemplated. So far are those Extracts from being offered to the public *instead* of the Bible, that the very reverse is the fact. The Commissioners in their official prospectus, expressly declare, “*that the use of the selected portions of Scripture, is by no means intended to constitute a sufficient religious education, or to supersede the necessity of separate religious instruction, on the days set apart for that purpose.*” And on those days, and indeed at certain hours on all other days in the week, spiritual instructors will have abundant opportunities of introducing the Bible without the omission, preterition or curtailment of a single verse.

Clandestinely to suppress any portion of the sacred volumes, and then palm, or attempt to palm, the remainder on the common people, as if it were the entire, would be a thing very different indeed, from making an avowed selection of certain passages, on account of their being better fitted for some particular purpose. And will any man maintain, that all parts of the Bible are equally well adapted to the capacities, and equally conducive to the edification of the young? Will any man affirm, that the dry genealogies, and the whole chapters of difficult and almost unpronounceable names, which occur in the *Old Testament*, tend as much to moral and religious improvement, as our Saviour’s sermon on the Mount, or the other plain and practical instructions which abound in the *New*?

I do not hesitate to say, that, in my opinion the entire Bible is unfit to be used as a school book by mere children. It contains many passages which children are incapable of comprehending; and to which they, of course, attach erroneous ideas, and when once an erroneous idea has been attached to any particular phrase, we all know how very rarely the connexion is ever afterwards dissolved.

There are some passages in the Jewish scriptures—instructive and edifying, no doubt, to the people for whose use they were originally intended; but which, owing to the changes which have since taken place, in manners, customs, and notions of decorum, would be offensive to the fastidious delicacy of modern ears—and which for that reason never have been read, and never will be read by any one of our clerical declaimers, either to his family, his pupils, or his flock. Let Sir Harcourt Lees, or Mr. Daly, or Dr. Cooke, contradict the assertion, and I will put his sincerity to the test, by prescribing to him a certain portion of the Old Testament, as a sabbath morning's prelection from the pulpit. Now I would ask, are not such silent passings-over as these virtual “expurgations of the Bible?” Were the whole of the sacred volume to be used in schools, only some parts of it would be read—and is it not as proper that those parts should be selected by a Board composed of respectable and intelligent individuals, as that the choice should be trusted to the discretion, and consequently to the indiscretion of particular teachers or patrons? Would the empty form of placing in a boy's hand certain leaves which he does not peruse, be a sufficient compensation for the evil which would result from barring the doors of national school houses, against four fifths of the children entitled to enter them?

It was the deliberate opinion of that great and good man, John Locke, that the indiscriminate use of the whole Bible as a school book,—is so far from tending to improve children in reading, “or principle them in religion,” that a worse practice could hardly be adopted.—“What pleasure or advantage,” says he, “can a boy derive from repeating words which he does not understand—and how little suited to his capacity, are the Levitical laws, the song of Solomon, the prophecies in the Old Testament, and the Apocalypse in the New? This injudicious mode of reading the Bible at school, is, in my opinion, the cause why so many men never come to a clear and distinct knowledge of the scripture during their whole lives.”

A volume of extracts from the word of God, has been published by the Orthodox Doctor Chalmers—and the Bible has ceased to be employed as a Class-book in

most of the schools in Edinburgh—and I believe the same practice prevails generally throughout Scotland.

In the blessed volume which is now spread before me, all the books both of the Old Testament and the New, are bound up together in one compact mass,—and people are apt to suppose, that this was at all times the case. No supposition can be more erroneous. It is well known, that the several writings which constitute the Bible, were produced at widely distant periods of time, and were separately circulated in widely distant regions of the world. The art of printing was not invented for more than fourteen hundred years after the age in which even the Evangelists lived—and so great were the trouble and the expense of procuring manuscript copies of works extending to any considerable length, that few christians indeed possessed more than one of the Gospels, or one of the Epistles—so that if a separate use of some parts of the sacred volume be so great an evil as it is now, for the first time represented, it is an evil which has been long prevalent in the Church.

My friends, you must, by this time be convinced, that scriptural selections, are neither so novel, nor so pernicious, as they have been described, and that the Bible is in no danger whatever of being mutilated. We are told, however, that it is in imminent hazard of being “burked and murdered”—expressions not very classical to be sure, but well calculated to fill an ignorant audience with horror; and for that reason frequently employed by rhetoricians of the “raw-head, and bloody-bones” school. The allegation is, that the Protestant Ministers of our Protestant King, have entered into a conspiracy to withdraw the scriptures entirely from the people of these countries—and thus pave the way for the progress of Popery and infidelity. This has been solemnly asserted by men stiling themselves “The Friends of God.” That Lord Grey, and Archbishop Whately, and other abandoned miscreants may *meditate* this sacrilegious act of spoliation is certainly possible—but hitherto at least, they have not committed any overt deed, indicative of the nefarious design. No act of Parliament has as yet been proposed—no Royal proclamation has as yet been issued, calling in all extant editions of the sacred volume, and



forbidding new ones to be printed, under penalty of fine, imprisonment, or banishment. If any thing of this kind has been done, no intelligence of the measure, has reached our remote district of the kingdom; and to say the truth, so prone am I to indulge in what some of our pious neighbours may deem carnal security, that I do not entertain any very dismal forebodings with regard to the calamity supposed to be impending. It does not strike me as probable that such a Bill will be agreed to, by King, Lords, and Commons:—and even supposing that it should—still I would cling to the hope that copies of the Bible might be occasionally smuggled into this country from the United States—or from Holland, or from France:—for even in Popish, and Deistical France, the scriptures are every day getting more and more into circulation. Therefore, I dismiss from my mind the gloomy anticipation. No doubt, the azure canopy over our heads, may fall on us to-morrow—the green Island on which we tread, may be suddenly immersed in the fathomless ocean, and the sacred volume may be interdicted by pains and penalties:—these are events all equally possible—But why should we torment ourselves before the time?—sufficient for the day will be the evil thereof. To be serious on such a topic, would be treating it with too much respect. Ridicule, is the only way in which it deserves to be met.

That *nothing* but the Bible, shall be used in schools, is one of the mottos inscribed on the banners of the Thundering Legion. In all ages, and amongst all sects, the hideous spirit of fanaticism has displayed itself in forms very nearly the same. During the dark ages, a library of immense extent, and incalculable value was committed to the flames by a sceptred disciple of Mahomet; and the bigoted barbarian justified, or attempted to justify the devastation, by alleging that if the books destroyed contained nothing but what was in accordance with the Koran, they were superfluous—and that if they contained any thing contrary to the Koran, they were pernicious. Our evangelical Vandals seem to have adopted a principle similar to that by which the Royal Mussulman was actuated. They seem to think that all information not strictly scriptural, must be either unnecessary or hurtful. Far be it from

me to depreciate the inestimable importance of the sacred writings; but God did not give them to mankind, as a compilation of all useful knowledge—and if nothing but the Bible were to be taught in seminaries of learning, there is reason to apprehend that young persons would enter on life and its complicated affairs, not very profoundly skilled in writing, arithmetic, or book-keeping—in mensuration, geography, or history.

Had our ruling powers authoritatively interfered in the business of education—had they presumed to declare that national schools should be the only ones tolerated, and that to these schools children of every religious denomination must repair—then would my voice have been as strenuously raised against the plan proposed as that of the loudest alarmist in the kingdom—Lord Roden himself would not have been more vociferous. But his Majesty's Ministers have not done any such thing. People will not be compelled or even importuned to send pupils to the general seminaries: but every man, will be left at full liberty to select the place, and the plan of education which he may deem best.

Addressing themselves to Government—our pseudo-philobiblicals say—“if you will not accede to our demand for a sectarian system of education—if you will not help us, to thrust protestant principles down Catholic throats—if you will not supply us with funds, for rearing our children in the peculiar dogmas of our own creed—and if you will not withhold all assistance from Romanists who may claim a similar privilege with regard to *their* offspring—then, in the name of God, “let us alone”—leave us to ourselves—let Protestants and Catholics educate their respective young people as they can—we barely request that you will not support the interest of our popish rivals.”

In making this proposal the anti-catholics have inadvertently discovered one of the motives by which they are secretly actuated. Liberality they abhor—the advancement of christian charity, and general knowledge, they dread. They are perfectly aware that the advancement of those things would soon put an end to their influence over the minds of the multitude, and of

course, they are hostile to all education except such as is calculated to rear up either staunch Calvinists, or staunch churchmen.

Respecting their wish, that Government would let them alone—I would ask, have they not that wish at the present moment? Are they not left to themselves, not merely without hinderance or molestation, but in the actual enjoyment of many extraneous facilities? They have already been placed on vantage ground, and does the new system encroach in any way, on their freedom of choice, or impede their future operations? If the national schools are not suited to their views, they either possess within themselves, or have been furnished from the public funds, with ample means, and ample opportunities, for conducting education according to their own plan—and then the only change that can result from the establishment of those seminaries, will be the extension of literary and moral instruction to thousands, nay millions of their fellow subjects who are now destitute of that invaluable blessing. The Illiberals will not lose a single privilege to which they have an equitable claim, whilst liberal Catholics, and liberal Protestants will gain much.—Yet in order to avert a consummation so devoutly to be wished, a preacher of the gospel has not scrupled to declare, that he would willingly “submit to have his right hand struck off.” The foul fiend himself never uttered—never conceived a sentiment more infernally diabolical. It must have emanated from pure disinterested wickedness.—Like the Pharisees of olden time, the enemies to national schools will neither enter in themselves, nor suffer those who would.

But say they, “if we establish one school where children must pay a full remuneration to the master—where they can get no books, paper, or other requisites, but at the very highest price—and if the government endow a school in our very neighbourhood—pay the master one third, or perhaps one half of his entire salary—give books, paper, and other requisites at half price—does this leave our plan free? No; it ensures the desertion of the poor, from dear to cheap education, and effects by bribery all the purposes of compulsion. It not only lays a trap for our pupils, but baits that trap with gingerbread.”—(*Dr. Cooke’s Sermon and Speech.*)

The foregoing remarks, if well founded, would cover with disgrace the party on whose behalf they are advanced.—That party is numerous, wealthy, and influential. Besides nearly the whole clergy of the established Church and of the General Synod, it comprises grandees, of almost every grade in society, from mitred bishops, and coroneted peers, to country parsons, and country squires. These gentry profess the warmest zeal for exclusively scriptural education, and a most ardent desire to promote the salvation of souls. As Mr Carlile has observed—Government has through the medium of the Kildare-place Society, studded the protestant part of Ireland with neat and commodious School-houses, which, nearly without exception, are under the management of the persons who either feel or affect so much alarm, on account of the apprehended downfall of their favourite plan.—But why should they be frightened?—All they have to do, is to keep in a state of repair, the fabricks already provided for them at the public expense, and to raise annually such small contributions, as may be requisite to place their schools on a footing of equality in point of cheapness, with those which derive assistance from the Board. If a body of men so numerous and so rich decline doing this, their zeal must be hypocritical, their fears must be feigned.—They have been furnished by the state with a sufficiency of traps—in their own stores there is gingerbread in abundance, and if they grudge to furnish the bait, we must conclude that great as their piety is known to be it is surpassed by their penuriousness. But let me do them justice. They are both able and willing to carry on a Sectarian system of Education to almost any extent, and this the Rev. advocate knew right well, though in order to serve a particular purpose, he has smothered the fact. At the moment he was speaking, he knew from the 17th Report made by the Kildare-street Committee, that “the contributions from private and local sources for the support of schools, more than equalled the sums granted by the Society”—and that delegates from the Society were collecting funds in England and elsewhere, for carrying on the crusade. Of all these circumstances he was perfectly aware; but there was an argument in his way, which could not be obviated without a suppression of the truth.

The friends of Sectarian Education, are certain that *they* can go on without pecuniary assistance from Government; they are also certain that there are many districts in Ireland where the friends of liberal education would not be able to do so. And they know that in those districts the trade of inveigling could still be pursued, or at all events, that the poor could be kept a little longer in ignorance. That the trade of inveigling has been covertly carried on by the agents of the Kildare-street Association, admits of no rational doubt. I know several instances in which Catholic teachers have found it their interest to conform to the Establishment. Would the Rodens, the Farnhams, the Lefroys, the Dalys, the Gordons, and the other champions of the New Reformation, have contended with so much ardour in support of an establishment which effectually discountenanced all attempts at proselytism? The advocacy of such men speaks volumes.

It has been asserted that the Kildare-street Society worked well; that it was universally disseminating the benefits of education, and that the Parliamentary grant ought, therefore, to have been continued. Whatever good the Institution may have done in Ulster, in the other parts of Ireland it had completely failed. Look to facts: the Report of 1829 is now lying before me; I see that in seven Northern Counties, the schools connected with the Society amounted, in number, to 908. In the remaining 25 Counties, there were only 58 schools and these thinly attended, and almost exclusively patronised by Clergymen of the Established Church, or high-flying Brunswickers. It appears from this, that the people of Ulster have already obtained far more than an adequate proportion of legislative bounty, and it is no more than fair that the attention of Government should now be directed to other quarters of the kingdom.

It has been urged as matter of objection, that the Board has been invested with entire control over all School-masters and School-books. The regulation is an excellent one, and absolutely necessary to prevent the introduction of improper books, or the appointment of improper masters. We have all heard of such histories as that of the Irish Rogues, having been used in country seminaries, and we all know the description of teachers which would be most acceptable to sanctimonious



patrons and committees. Drunkenness or incapacity would be overlooked in a proselytizing pedagogue. However, the authority to be exercised by the Commissioners is merely negative. They may decide that such or such a master is disqualified, and that such or such a book is pernicious; but they have declared that the positive selections will remain with the managers of schools.

It is plain then, my friends, that the clamour which has been excited against the system of National Education, has been excited without cause. The Bible is in no danger—Protestantism is no danger,—but the reign of bigotry and fanaticism, and the prolongation of political and ecclesiastical abuses, are in appalling jeopardy. This is the real source of the alarm which has been so hypocritically expressed. The outcry has been prompted by a horde of voracious tax-consumers, who have long been preying like vultures on the vitals of the community, and who are trembling under the apprehension of being compelled to disgorge a portion of their ill-gotten spoil. Could the present Reforming Cabinet be displaced, and one of a different character be brought into power—could government by corrupt influence be perpetuated—could the continuance of tithes, and pensions, and sinecures, and grand-jury exactions be secured, all fear with regard to the murder of the Bible would be dispelled; and the universal establishment of National Schools would cease to endanger Protestantism. “The fact,” says Dr. Chalmers, in a speech lately delivered by him, at an ecclesiastical meeting, “the fact is too glaring to be denied, that a great deal more of politics than of religion, is mixed up with the opposition given to the new scheme of Education. Thousands who do not care one straw for Christianity, have agitated this question, in the hope that it may eventually prove the overthrow of the Ministry.”

Presbyterians have often allowed themselves to be used as tools for promoting the selfish purposes of their very worst enemies; and when the purpose of the moment was served, they have always been thrown contemptuously aside. It is to be hoped that continued experience will yet make them wise. Even the most ignorant and credulous amongst them are now beginning to perceive the delusion of which they have been the dupes.

THE OPENING OF THE NEW PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH, IN ROSEMARY-STREET.\*

THE Congregation assembled was very numerous, and included persons of every rank and denomination, that could pay two shillings for admittance, and contribute to the collection for defraying the debt incurred in building the house.

The service was commenced by Dr. Hanna, with an appropriate Prayer, Lessons, and Psalms. The sermon, which was also preceded by prayer, was preached by Mr. Grey, Minister of St. Mary's, Edinburgh. It was natural to expect that it would be devoted to a recommendation of harmony and co-operation in a good work, as the preacher was aware, that his audience was composed of christians of various denominations. We were therefore, somewhat perplexed, when he announced for his Text. Heb. xiii. 13. "Let us go forth, unto him without the Camp, bearing his reproach." It immediately occurred to some, that this would be a very suitable Text, for a Meeting of Remonstrant Ministers, upon coming forth of the Synod, and exposing themselves to all the reproaches which have been liberally poured upon them since that time; and though they could not hope, that Mr. Grey would expressly take up their cause, they felt encouraged to look for a very charitable discourse. These expectations were not damped by his exordium, though it still left us in some perplexity as to the drift of the sermon; for it enlarged upon the effects of public opinion and force, respectively, on religion. The commencement was favourable to freedom of opinion; but still we were at a loss to conjecture, how this long introduction could be brought to bear on the immediate purpose of our Meeting.

It soon appeared, indeed, that Mr. Grey had taken a false position and mistaken his ground. Instead of being adapted to that staunch, opulent and numerous Body, who had reared such a magnificent Church, who have always been noted for firmness in maintaining their principles, and least of all, liable to be shaken by the taunts and scoffs of the Latitudinarian, and the pro-

---

\* If the Third Congregation have adopted this Title, they seem to relinquish their rank among the Old Presbyterian Establishments of the Town, and to be content to fall in at the tail of the newly erected Meeting Houses.

fane; the discourse seemed to have been prepared for some weakly, tottering Society, of modest retiring disciples, who had withdrawn from the Camp, (the World,) to indulge in pious meditation and religious exercises, but still exposed to reproaches and calumnies, and branded with opprobrious and scornful names. All these modes of offence and vituperation were enumerated, and the audience were exhorted to bear them with patience and fortitude. He complained particularly, that godly people should be called hypocrites, bigots, methodists, and saints. I thought that he might have bestowed a portion of his commiseration and encouragement upon those worthy Unitarians, who suffer for conscience' sake, and endure the reproach of being stigmatised as sceptics, infidels, deniers of the Lord that bought them, soul-destroyers, &c., in comparison with which the epithet of saints and methodists may be considered as complimentary; but he seemed to me to be a little inclined to use similar language himself; for he laid the blame of calumniating and vilifying the saints upon certain nominal christians; men without any knowledge of godliness, or vital religion, who denied the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, meaning thereby the peculiarities of Calvin. These peculiarities he specified with observations, which might as well have been omitted in addressing a mixed assembly of strangers.

In general, any allusion to local differences is indiscreet and intermeddling in a stranger; unkind to people assembled to do him honour, and injurious to the cause, which he has been employed to advocate. There was one point on which I particularly admired the discretion of both Ministers. The Trinity was not even mentioned nor alluded to, throughout the whole service.

As it is evident that this sermon was neither composed, nor at all calculated for this occasion, we may reasonably presume that it was intended for home service. In this view, the impression left upon our minds was, that Religion must be in a pitiable case in St. Mary's, Edinburgh. Those poor people must surely be brow-beaten and overawed by some audacious Sceptics and Deists, and infested with Sophists and Philosophers, men "devoid of the knowledge of God and vital Religion, and denying the peculiar and essential doctrines of the Gospel."

As the Sermon had no relation either to the congregation or the occasion, and it was necessary to make an appeal to the purses of the assembly, the difficulty now was, how to make a transition, and to pass from the Sermon to the object of our meeting, which was, in truth, of much more importance, and nearer the hearts of the Congregation, than the Sermon itself. The thing was impracticable; but Mr. Grey hit upon a very happy expedient to get out of this dilemma. This was, to give out another Psalm. While the Psalm was singing,\* we were indulging the expectation of a solemn, pathetic, and eloquent peroration, such as our own Preachers deliver with great effect in behalf of our charitable institutions: we hoped for a specimen of pathos and unction from one who ranks high among the preachers of the Caledonian Capital. In this expectation, however, we found that we were premature, for our preacher thought it necessary and appropriate to prefix a long dissertation on the first and second Temples of Jerusalem.

From the Temple of Jerusalem we were suddenly transported into the Millennium. How this was introduced, or why, no one, I believe, could tell. As a warning, however, it was not premature; for we were told, that we were standing on the verge of that awful and mysterious scene of which the next generation would be spectators, and that for them that building had been erected.

The poor were then exhorted to give somewhat out of their poverty, the rich in proportion to their riches, and to do it willingly, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Another Prayer and Psalm concluded the whole. As the service had lasted two hours and a half, and most of the people had attended two before, I believe the dismissal was as agreeable as any other part of this disjointed and tedious discourse.

On the whole Mr. Grey acquired no addition to his fame, either for eloquence or prudence by his visit to Belfast: even the *Orthodox Presbyterian* has permitted it to pass unnoticed.

ERASMUS.

---

\* The participle in *ing* is both active and passive, and was so used both in conversation and by the best writers, till supplanted by the late clumsy innovation, *being sung, being builded, being called, being taught, &c.* *A-singing, a-building, &c.*, is become obsolete, but ought to have been retained. *In building, &c.* is still in use, as in John ii. 20. "Forty and six years was this temple in building." All these denote also a continued operation.

## SUGGESTIONS RESPECTING A UNITARIAN LIBRARY.

[TO THE EDITORS OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

“In the College at Clausenburg, there is also a Library, composed of Classic Authors, and Ecclesiastical Works, among which those volumes are conspicuous which the English Unitarians, in former years, have sent there; but it wants the Authors of more recent days, owing to a deficiency of funds.”

GENTLEMEN,—The perusal of this passage in the letter from Alexander Farkas to the Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, relative to the present state of the Unitarians of Transylvania, renewed in my mind, the feeling of a want which has for a considerable time been experienced by me, and, I doubt not, by many other Unitarians in this country. Did I believe that the feeling were confined to myself, I would certainly not have been so presumptuous as to have, through you, pleaded for its selfish gratification. I allude to the want of a Library of Unitarian Works. Whatever others may have felt on this point, I can say, that I have for several years put myself to much inconvenience by the purchase of works of this description, and still my appetite for such publications is far from being gratified; nor is it likely to be so, so long as I perceive the names of new, and, by all accounts, able and interesting Treatises by Unitarians, which it is not in my power to procure, except through such a Subscription Library as I contemplate. I am much inclined to think that the establishment of such a thing in Belfast would be hailed with joy, not only by many Lay Unitarians, who like myself, live in the country, but by our Unitarian Ministers, both in Belfast and its neighbourhood. Without considerable, and to many of us hurtful, expenditure, we cannot procure a reading of the more modern, the more voluminous, and the more expensive Theological Works of our brethren, both in England and in America. I have no doubt that many also would desire a perusal both of the English and American Unitarian Periodicals. As this Library should exclusively consist of Religious Works by Unitarians, and as many persons who might wish to become partakers of its benefits, are at present subscribers to Libraries of General Literature, it might be desirable to make the subscription as light as circumstances would admit.



It may be thought by some, that the Library which would be attached to the Divinity Class intended to be established in connexion with the Remonstrant Synod, might have its benefits extended to others besides students; but this I conceive would not, for several reasons, answer our purpose, any more than it might suit the Class. To uphold that character of impartiality, which distinguishes the Remonstrants, the Class Library, as well as the Lectures of the Professor, should not—like the Library and Lectures of the General Synod's Professor—be chiefly confined to one side of the question. Students might, besides their Class Library, have open to them such a Library as is here contemplated, if they choose to avail themselves of its benefits. But that such a thing is wanted, and that immediately, by decided Unitarians, for the satisfaction of themselves, and the benefit of their families, I should consider quite apparent. While on this subject, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of recommending most highly to all who may see this letter, the purchase of the Tracts of the Christian Society, whose six volumes I have procured. It is an admirable work both for young and old. In conclusion, I hope some of those gentlemen who are most prominent in our cause in Belfast, as Rev. Messrs. Montgomery, Blakely, Bruce, Porter, &c., will through your next number, give notice of a private Meeting of Unitarians in that town, for the consideration of the necessity and propriety of such a Library as is here alluded to.

Your friend,

A. C. D. M.

[ *We highly approve of the suggestions of our unknown correspondent: and when more pressing objects shall have been accomplished, we shall be most happy to afford our best exertions in aid of a Unitarian Library, similar to that proposed.* ]

## REVIEW.

"NATIONAL EDUCATION—*A Sermon preached in the Presbyterian Church, May-Street, Belfast, upon Sunday, the 15th January, 1832, by HENRY COOKE, D. D.*"

WE turn back with delightful recollection, to the time when the Holy Sabbath was really a day of rest and peace to Presbyterian Ulster—when the simple peasant, the artisan, the trader, and all the varied classes of Society, repaired in a cheerful and devout frame of mind, to the House of Prayer, to hear the plain and edifying truths of the Gospel ; and returned with hearts overflowing with gratitude to God, and charity towards man. Those were halcyon days ; for the arrogant spirit of domination had not arisen in the churches ; the bitter political controversialist had not profaned the sanctuary by his theatrical and envenomed orations ; and the minds of the people were not inflamed against their brethren, by foul misrepresentations of the measures of Government, and of the religious opinions of their fellow christians. The services of religion were *then* attended for the sake of edification, not of excitement : the vain, the angry, the selfish passions of the human breast were hushed into repose, instead of being awakened into folly and madness ; and women were, what Heaven designed them to be, humble, diffident, retiring christians, "keepers-at-home," faithful wives and mothers, affectionate daughters and sisters, cheerful and rational companions, instead of being, what too many unhappily now are, "busy-bodies, whisperers," intruders into families ; presumptuously assuming illumination from on high, amidst extreme earthly ignorance and vanity, and whirling through society under the wild excitement of politico-religious harangues, to the neglect of the calm and sacred duties of domestic life. There is no being on earth so truly interesting and lovely, as a woman sincerely influenced by religion—devout without superstition, serious without gloom, firm in her own faith without censuring the creed of others, and manifesting "the power of godliness," by uniform serenity, cheerfulness, and decorum. On the other hand, few objects excite more painful feelings in a well regulated mind, than a vain and ignorant woman, putting on the

air of infallibility, parading her sanctity before the world, obtruding her contradictory dogmas upon those who are, in every sense, her superiors in judgment and information, and seeking the excitement of the theatre or the ball room, in the prayer-meeting or the conventicle. Such persons, like the "silly women" described by Paul, swarm in every town, village, and hamlet of the empire—nay, they often deform the fair and peaceful scenes even of rural life. We may lament, though we cannot be surprised at, the wretched exhibitions which are every day placed before the world, under the assumed sanction of religion: for, when the pulpit is profaned, to the propagation of delusion and hatred, it would be a miracle, if ignorant and unsuspecting auditors were not caught in the snare.

The Discourse, whose title we have placed at the head of these remarks, is a fair specimen of the harangues which spread delusion and rancour over the land. It is only justice to the Author, however, to admit, that it wants many of the charms and attractions which it originally possessed. It is no more like the thundering oration twice delivered in *May-Street Church*, to an electrified audience, than a taper is to the glorious sun. Two months' consideration have wonderfully changed its complexion! It has been sadly curtailed too, of its fair proportions—its splendid figures, its newspaper criticisms, its *friendly* attacks upon dear Mr. Carlile, and its classical "burking of the Bible!" It is now in good sooth, a very tame affair—interspersed with rather more blunders in grammar and composition, than could have been expected from the rigid critic, who has so often assailed the style of Professor Ferrie. The wonder, however, is, not that it is tame, but that it ever saw the light, in its present form. It required no common nerve and face to publish as an Original Sermon, what had been virtually published twice, previously, in the Orthodox Presbyterian, spouted at the Belfast Meeting, circulated in a pamphlet of speeches, re-delivered at the Synod in Cookstown, and hawked over the country in various forms. But, with all its smoothings down, and taken as the result of calm and serious deliberation, it is still abundantly remarkable.

It sets out with a great deal of special pleading, illustrative of the various points of a political nature, on which Religion, *may*, or *may not* interfere. We confess, that this portion of the sermon is rather bewildering and mystical to us; but, so far as we can discover its meaning, its checks and counter-checks, it would seem to imply, that religion may properly interpose when Governments adopt measures for the extension of information and liberty, but that she ought to stand aloof when Rulers are executing plans for the suppression of knowledge and freedom. The author, however, takes especial care to put in a saving clause in favour of the Bishops: "We would, by no means, be understood to interfere with those ecclesiastical men, who, by virtue of certain temporal dignities, may be called by the constitution of particular states, to the occasional exercise of secular duties." Amiable man! No, the Bishops are clothed with power; and who would interfere with those who are patronised by fashion and the world! This false and hollow Presbyterian, who has for years been basely fawning upon Prelacy, in order to court its smiles and secure the backing of temporal power, has stunned our ears with invoking "the spirits of Wishart, Hamilton, and Knox," to impede the mere temporal education of Roman Catholics—as if he did not know, that the glorious Reformers and Martyrs of Scotland had equally resisted "Popery and Prelacy," and denounced the episcopal church as "a Limb of Antichrist!" How dares he to utter those illustrious names, whilst he is licking the dust before the Establishment, and acting as the tool of that very Prelacy, which poured out torrents of Scottish blood, filled the glens of Scotland with the cries of widows, and orphans, and butchered infants, and drove the bravest and most faithful spirits of earth, to worship their God amidst the caves, and bogs, and mountains of their wretched country! Is it this miserable coadjutor and sycophant of Prelacy, whom his ignorant or cunning adulators have dared to call "a second Knox"—profaning a mighty name, whose illustrious possessor would rather have submitted to ten thousand martyrdoms than have united himself in any species of religious alliance with those who dethrone the only true king of the church, and place a temporal monarch in his room! "Spirits of Wishart, Ham-

ilton, and Knox," could you revisit this nether world, what would be your indignation at the degenerate men, who dare to utter your *names*, whilst they are treading your principles in the dust!

The author is equally mild on the subject of *Regium Donum*, as on that of Bishops:—"We would not," he says, "be understood to teach, that a Christian may not accept the friendship and protection of worldly and unconverted men." No, indeed! What genuine son of modern evangelicism would refuse the friendship of any, how wicked soever, who have the fashion of the world on their side, and the emoluments of the world to bestow?

The writer concludes the first grand division of his subject with the following sublime sentence, which our readers may possibly understand, though we confess our utter ignorance of its import:—"Righteousness and peace are not only matters between God and the soul, but they are likewise matters between man and man: *the great political principles of the universe expounded in the New Testament in all their multiplied and subordinate details.*" The political principles of the universe! How grand!

The second great division of his Discourse, the author introduces with the bold and manly avowal of his adoption of the debasing, slavish doctrine of "non-resistance and passive obedience." Did we believe in the Pythagorean doctrine of the transmigration of souls, we should suspect that the spirit of *Doctor Henry Sacheverel*, so notorious in the days of Queen Anne, had passed into the clay tenement of *Doctor Henry Cooke*, in our own days. We do confess, that so gross a perversion of Scripture, we never read, as that by which he would make our Blessed Lord and his Apostles stand forward as the champions of political tyranny. Though our Saviour expressly declares, that "his kingdom is *not* of this world," Dr. Cooke impugns the assertion, enters into a pitiful play upon words to set aside its obvious meaning, and represents that religion whose divine principles are calculated to annihilate all oppression, as teaching men to submit to every yoke, however iniquitous and debasing. We have neither time nor space, to make large quotations, or large comments; although the sentiments introduced in this Sermon amply deserve exposure.



But, we must treat our readers to a few short specimens of the author's manly views.

"All political power is only and directly from God. Before we come to consider the *divine origin* of government, in general, we must endeavour to settle the question of the Jewish theocracy in particular. This theocracy is supposed to have ceased, when the irreligion of the government, as it were, *expelled God (!)* from the thrones of Judah and Israel, and established in his stead the reign of mere human authority. If the Jewish state, in spite of its rebellion against God, still continues a theocracy, then are other governments, notwithstanding their infidelity, heathenism or wickedness, likewise theocracies, deriving their authority directly from God. We hesitate not to state it as our confirmed opinion, that *all* governments, at this present day, are theocracies. What! are heathen, mahomedan, infidel powers, as well as Christian, ordained of God? We answer—every one of them. The second *political* principle of the New Testament asserts the headship of Christ over *all* forms of human government. The recognition of rulers and subjects, the establishment of power, not only over the *bodies* but the *consciences* of men, and the duty of ministers to inculcate political obedience, are so many abiding witnesses of the determinate political character of the New Testament, and of the teachers and members of the Christian Church. In the payment of tribute, the people are God's accountable debtors. For the faults of our rulers, we are not to diminish our loyalty, but to multiply our prayers. The power that resides originally in God, is delegated to his creature man."

Now we do not say, that the above quotations "are flat blasphemies:" but, if human language can convey the grossest insult to God, or inculcate the most abject degradation of man, we do declare our conviction, that the passages quoted are equally libels upon the Deity, and debasing to human nature. It is worthy of the man, and only of him, who dared to speak of "localizing the Deity," to say of the omnipotent and eternal Ruler of the Universe, that He was "*expelled* from the thrones of Judah and Israel." And when we consider the thousands of villains, of all creeds and all countries, who have "waded through slaughter to a throne," and drenched the green earth with the blood of her children—when we reflect upon those scourges of the world that have trodden under-foot the liberties, and prosperity, and happiness of nations—when we think of those monsters, called Roman Emperors, who lighted their public walks with the burning bodies of christian martyrs—when we view those greater monsters of iniquity, who, under the pretext of promoting the cause of the Gospel, have sacrificed millions of their

fellow christians to their bigotry or ambition—when we consider all these things, and the awful havock of human happiness, which tyrant Rulers have made in all ages and all countries,—we shudder at the idea of any man standing in a christian pulpit, and declaring that the just and merciful God has been the patron and prime mover of all the atrocitiess of earth. Oh, what must be his conceptions of the God of mercy and of truth, who represents him as the head of *all* governments, infidel, profligate, and infamous—upholding, by the same power, various opposing systems of religion and policy, sanctioning the massacre of his saints, impeding the progress of his Gospel, and urging men to the daring violation of his own most sacred laws! And what must Presbyterians think of the man, who has the hardihood to aver, that not only the *bodies*, but likewise the *consciences* of men, are to be subject to any temporal rulers, heathen, infidel, or wicked, who may have acquired unrighteous dominion over the nations! Besides, “the faults of our rulers should not diminish our loyalty but multiply our prayers!” Spirits of Wishart, Hamilton, and Knox, and all ye hosts of Scottish martyrs and confessors, did you then, indeed, resist the ordinance of God, and were you guilty of the crime of rebellion against high heaven, when you so gloriously spurned the tyranny of the Jameses and the Charleses! On the principles of this most degrading production, the memories of Hampden, Sidney, and Russel, deserve only to be execrated; and the Revolution of 1688, commonly called *glorious*, though it put down Popery and established Protestantism, was nothing less than a wicked rebellion against *the theocracy of James the Second!* In fact, all men have been falsely called patriots, who in any age or country, have revolted against arbitrary and inhuman princes; for, they have not acknowledged “the divine origin of Governments in general!”

But, strange as all this may appear, something more wonderful succeeds it. After showing, through ten or twelve pages, that it is nothing short of warring against Heaven, to gainsay the plans of any government, the author with his wonted consistency, turns round, and assaults, with unequalled effrontory and misrepresentation, the government under which we live! To be sure,

they are only Whigs and Reformers, friends to the real liberty and general improvement of the people, not saintly sinecurists and corrupt factionists; and, therefore, they may possibly be no "*theocracy*," but legitimate objects of attack. It would be sickening to follow him thro' all his stale and hackneyed misrepresentations of the proposed "Plan of National Education." Besides, we want both time and space for such a task. To a very few points, however, we must advert.

1. He attacks the *constitution* of the Board; they are not all of one church and one creed. "What a motley group!" he exclaims. Now, it may be a sad thing, that a Board for the general education of the youth of Ireland, is not entirely composed of "orthodox presbyterians," with *Doctor Cooke* at its head, instead of the Duke of Leinster; but some foolish people still think it not very improper, to have men of different creeds, upon a Board intended to manage the education of all denominations of christians. It has been hinted also, that in his heart, the good Doctor is not so stern an enemy of "discordant combinations," as he would have us believe: witness his own "heart-probing," Synodical Committee, which contains nearly all the creeds in Christendom, and his harlequin exhibition of prelacy and presbytery, Calvinism and Arminianism, saints and sinners, at his late anti-education meeting in Belfast.

2. The Doctor avers, "that parents *must* choose a teacher with the mark of the Board on his forehead." When he concocted, spoke, wrote, and published this statement, he well *knew* that it contained an accusation *directly contrary to fact*. No parent is *compelled* to choose a teacher, or to send his child to any National School: he is left entirely free on both points. Yet, the Doctor is a very orthodox divine, and *says* that he is regenerated by the Spirit of *Truth*.

3. He alleges next, that "the Board are vested with a power to *approve* or *disapprove* of any portion of Scripture." This is a pure fiction, "a brain-born dream." They have power to extract such portions as they may deem best adapted for the edification of youth, in the hours of united instruction; and we have yet to learn, that it is a crime for the National Board, to do that which has been done by the Church of England, the

Church of Scotland, the most learned divines of all churches, and even by the Kildare-Place Society itself. But it seems, *extracts* are the same as "*mutilations*," or "*expurgations*:" and then, we have hair-splitting, and quibbling upon words, that would disgrace a Jesuist, or the lowest pettifogger in the lowest manor court. To crown the exhibition, we are treated to the paltry, thread-bare, clap-trap of "the Devil being the first expurgator of the Bible"—the charitable inference to be drawn from which is, that all who countenance the government plan of Education, are the pupils and co-adjutors of Satan! How faction, or a depraved ambition, or mob applause, could induce any man to frame such an accusation, and to endeavour to support it by a palpable "wresting of Scripture," we have no powers to comprehend. This portion of the discourse, as well as many others, amply proves, that if the Devil was the *first* mutilator and expurgator of the Bible, he was not the *last*.

4. The Doctor next observes—"that one whole year out of seven, the government would *compel* every Protestant father and every Protestant child to surrender to Popery." This too is a mere orthodox fable—utterly false in all its parts. No father, no child, is *compelled* to surrender a single hour to popery: yet, this was gravely delivered from a pulpit called evangelical!

5. The author proceeds in his wonderful career to assert—"that the plan vests one Presbyterian minister with a power of dictating to his brethren—how much or how little of the Bible they may be permitted to use for instructing the children of their congregations." Is it possible for any rational being, to believe this shocking imputation against men, whose only crime is, that they wish to give a moral and religious education to *all* the people, without sanctioning the proselytizing designs of saints and fanatics? This charge is exactly upon a level with those which have horrified the ignorant multitude, by alleging that Government had laid a deep scheme for "depriving Protestants of their Bibles, suppressing the Protestant religion, and establishing Popery on its ruins!"

It is mighty pleasant, however, to hear the good Doctor *now* shouting until he is absolutely hoarse—"The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the

Bible;" protesting that "he will not drink the muddy water" of human inventions, and that "he will preserve the fountain pure from all contaminating mixture." What! no Catechisms, no Confessions of Faith, no Synodical Overtures, no heart-probing Committees! No; nothing "but the uncontaminated fountain." Hail, Remonstrant brother, illustrious convert to the cause of Christian liberty! How the Meeting-House of Monaghan will ring with plaudits, next month, when the honest, consistent divine, shall confess his sins against truth, and move the total repeal of all those iniquitous enactments which have rent asunder the General Synod of Ulster, and spread hatred and lies over our once peaceful Province! He must have been converted, we surmise, by the following graphic description of Hypocrisy, drawn by his own powerful hand, and evincing the most profound knowledge of the subject, as if he had entered the dark recesses of some hypocrite's heart.

"The essence of hypocrisy with men, consists in having two rules for the same action; one for ourselves, another for our neighbour. 'Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, ye bind heavy burdens upon other men's shoulders, and ye yourselves will not touch them with one of your fingers.' Here are the two rules of the hypocrite—one for his own 'finger,' another for his neighbour's 'shoulder:' one rule when an action pleases, another when it displeases him."

Some persons are very curious to know, whether the good Doctor's *own* sons have "daily, and all day long," read the "whole Bible," at school. This is an idle curiosity; for *he* is not like the hypocrite, having "one rule of action for himself, and another for his neighbour"! Oh, no.

We have wasted too much space, perhaps, upon this worthless publication, which is wretched in its style, more wretched in its spirit, and most detestable in its object. Are we never to have peace or charity in this unhappy land? Will political and religious speculators perpetually be allowed to fan the flame of hatred, to separate those who ought to be united in the bonds of affection, as fellow-subjects and fellow-christians, and to prevent all union and co-operation for the improvement of our common country? Will ministers of the Gospel of peace continue to "prostitute and shame their noble office," by courting an ephemeral and disgraceful



popularity, in pandering to the worst passions of political faction, and religious intolerance? The Anti-Education mania, indeed, is rapidly passing away: the principal actors have been stripped of their sanctimonious masks, and stand exposed to the scorn of the world in their real character of political agitators: their wilful misrepresentations are generally known, and the Protestant population are beginning clearly to see, that Government have no desire to prevent the perusal of the Bible, in its greatest latitude; but, on the contrary, the most ardent wish that *all* the people may be enabled to read its sacred contents with advantage, by a salutary preparatory education. We do hope, and believe, that it will be long, ere any Congregation calling itself Christian, shall request the publication of a Discourse, similar to that of which we now take leave, with unmingled disgust and contempt.



#### PUBLIC FASTS, IRRATIONAL AND ANTICHRISTIAN:

*A Discourse, delivered in the Unitarian Chapel, Glasgow, on Sunday, March 18th, 1832, by George Harris.*

WE are extremely gratified in being enabled to place the admirable, eloquent, Christian Sermon, of *Mr. Harris*, in juxtaposition with the inflated tirade of *Dr. Cooke*. The Unitarian Minister comes forth in all the intrepid manhood of a patriot, to rebuke the crimes and hypocrisies of Rulers, whilst, at the same time, in the genuine spirit of the Gospel, he nobly advocates the liberty of man, both in his social and Christian relations; and most eloquently proves, that the true glory and prosperity of a nation must be sought in the enlightenment and virtue of its people, and the universal diffusion of the great principles of toleration, equity, and benevolence. We very much regret that the state of our pages will not permit us to give copious extracts from this beautiful Discourse; though, indeed, we should find it no easy task to make *selections*, where every part is so well worthy of perusal. Our readers, we trust, will speedily obtain the Sermon itself; which is by far too good to be "mutilated, expurgated, or burked," by

short quotations. However, as a specimen of the spirit and style in which it is composed, we give the following.

"Christianity is the gift of the Father of lights, the source of all knowledge and of every perfection; and like its all-gracious Author, is in itself perfect and entire, wanting nothing. The Christian has been called unto liberty: the service of God, is a service of perfect freedom. The chartered rights of the believer in Jesus, cannot be abrogated by the commands of earthly power. No one can legislate for the conscience of another. It is amenable to no human law, it is cognizable by no human tribunal. Allow that it were amenable, that man had a right to legislate respecting it, and where would be the end of imposition and of tyranny? My conscience, it may be, differs from yours, and yours from mine, whilst that of another differs from both. The interference of earthly authority, would be the destruction of liberty to all. Nothing is trivial that has a reference to the human mind. Interference with the relations that exist between man and the God who made him, may be seldom attempted, but always should it be met by remonstrance and condemnation. We cannot be too scrupulous in such a case.

---

## Intelligence.

### GREYABBEY LECTURES.

OUR readers will learn by the cover of our present number, that a course of Ten Lectures has been opened in the Meeting-house, Greyabbey, on very interesting subjects. Mr. Blakely, of Moneyrea, delivered the introductory discourse on last Sabbath, to a numerous and respectable audience. We would recommend to the officiating Ministers, to give two discourses each Lord's day. This, we have reason to know, is the desire of the members of the Congregation, and we venture to prognosticate that they shall not be disappointed. Our clerical friends will find them attentive, well informed, and anxious for improvement.

EDITORS.

---

## CORRESPONDENTS.

"SUNDAY-SCHOOL READINGS," and other Articles unavoidably delayed: amongst the rest, "AN EXPOSURE OF THE BALLYCARRY ORTHODOX CONSPIRACY."

We regret that we have not space for the report of the proceedings of the Remonstrant Presbytery of Bangor, at their last stated meeting, held at Moneyrea, on the 25th ultimo; nor for the account of the Congregational Dinner given to them and the neighbouring Ministers of the Presbytery of Antrim, on the occasion. It appears that three very talented young men gave in homilies, after which the Presbytery proceeded to consider some important matters connected with their future studies, and the subject of National Education. In the evening the Ministers were entertained at dinner in the large school-room, Dr. Stewart, R. N. in the chair, and Mr. John Orr Lowry officiating as croupier. Though the Rev. Dr. Bruce and several other individuals were prevented, by various causes, from joining the dinner party, about fifty sat down at five o'clock, and retired at ten, having spent the evening in free and useful conversation. The Rev. George Harris, of Glasgow, who was on his way to Dublin, was one of the guests.

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

---

No. V.

JUNE, 1832.

VOL. III.

---

ON OLD AGE.

THIS period of life is in youth the object of our hopes, and afterward becomes the subject of our complaints, and at the same moment excites our ambition and moves our contempt—we desire it for ourselves and despise it in others.

Nothing can more strongly demonstrate the folly and inconsistency of man. There is but one particular in which we agree with one another or with ourselves. We never wish to accelerate its approach; and when it arrives, we always think it is come too soon. We receive it with the same coldness which a good housewife betrays to an uninvited guest; and for the same reason, because we have made no preparation for it. We wish perhaps, to see him, but not now: and as this word *now* applies to every moment of life when it arrives, the secret truth appears to be, that we never wish to see him. We hope to live long without being old. This is the latent, lurking absurdity, which we never take the trouble to detect. If this wish could be granted, it would be followed by another, namely, that not being old we should never die.

There is a season of life, in which a man hesitates between complaining of age, and boasting of the continuance of youth. "Grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not." Men would fain excuse their infirmities and their indolence by accusing time, did not this imply, that they were no longer young. They would assume a juvenile appearance, did not this deprive them of the respect and indulgence due to the infirmities of the old. They are in the autumn of life. Would they were in the harvest! reaping the comforts of religion, the pleasures of knowledge, the dignity of virtue, laying up treasures in heaven, storing a provision for life eternal. But though we feel that the

spring of life is past, before we think how we shall gather its flowers ; and that the fruits of summer are dropping before we can store them ; though we know that the frost of winter will speedily congeal our humours, and benumb our joints, and that its snows will shortly cover our heads, how few are there who look forward to that season, study to guard against its evils, or to improve its advantages, or even consider whether it is possible to render it respectable or tolerable ! Yet this should be a principal employment of every man, whether he esteems this life the whole of his portion, or considers it as a passage to another. In the first case he will study to render every hour of his precarious tenure productive of pleasure ; in the other he will perceive that God has graciously ordained, that the virtues which shall secure our introduction into a better world, will crown our declining years with comfort and respect, and prepare the hoary head for being transformed into a crown of glory.

No portion of life is usually attended with fewer comforts or less respectability than old age : none perhaps is susceptible of more. Every thing that nature and the course of providence have done is frustrated, by our indulgence of unreasonable hopes and contemptible passions. An ingenious declaimer on this subject might draw a beautiful description of the felicity which awaits an old man ; but he could derive little assistance from experience or observation. An attentive observer of human life might exhibit a melancholy spectacle of his infirmities and follies, without once calling in the aid of fancy.

The one might represent him as enjoying the tranquil evening of a well spent day : the other as sinking into the gloom and horrors of a dark and tempestuous night. The first might describe the variety of his knowledge the wisdom of his observations, the affability and good humour of his general conversation : the second might draw him, as ignorant of what was past, discontented with the present, and fearful of the future. The former might paint the little company of his fireside, and the larger circle of his friends, and might mark their countenances with filial affection and respect,

friendly esteem, sedulous attention and gratitude. The latter might charge his picture with the colours of a dreary solitude, or the figures of children oppressed by his tyranny, and longing for a period to his reign : of old acquaintances fleeing from his inhospitable and uncomfortable mansion, and of the wretch himself, the prey of envy and regret, splenetic and morose, covetous and parsimonious ; and though surrounded by the ghastly images of disease, the awful and afflicting ministers of death ; laying up provisions for his journey with increasing avidity as he draws towards its end.

Neither of those states is imposed on us by nature ; but in general we have an option. If we be negligent in furnishing our minds with useful knowledge, how can we be expected to be consulted as oracles ? If we suffer them to be overrun by unsocial passions, what can we look for but a solitary old age ? If we retain in our coffers an useless hoard of wealth, suffering our children to pine in want and inactivity, shall we wonder that they long for our decease ?

If no worthy or indigent friend has ever shared our bounty, what is it to him whether we live or die ? But on the other hand, who can have stronger claims and more rational hopes of happiness, than a wise benevolent old man ? the chronicle of the past age, the friendly monitor of the present, and the paternal instructor of the rising generation. The very languor and imbecility of his body releases him from the more violent exertions of his youth, and is happily combined with tranquility of mind. His passions subside with his strength. His mild yet vigorous understanding shines forth like gold tried in the furnace, freed from its dross, separated from the embers, mellowed and refined by the fiery trial ; or like the evening sun, which, after dispersing the mists of a cloudy and stormy day, smiles with a clear and cheerful face upon the earth to which it gives a kind farewell. He at length retires from life, like a contented guest from a plentiful feast, saying, farewell hospitable world !

We may proceed even further in our encomium on a respectable old age. It not only has some few remaining comforts to boast, the shattered remains of better



days, but will bear to be compared with any other period of life, without losing much by the comparison: for Providence hath allotted to every season its peculiar blessings. As the activity of the youthful body is happily adapted to the restlessness of the youthful mind; so is the inertness of age well suited to the tranquillity and moderation of its passions: and having enjoyed the pleasures of strenuous activity and lively pursuit, the old man will gladly exchange them for those of peace and quiet: he will delight in repose during the evening of an active and laborious day, and when night shall come, will retire to sleep with his fathers. He will exchange the desire of knowledge for that of dispensing his information or remarks; the pleasure of learning for the pride of teaching.

He will be agreeably surprised to find that he only forgets those recent and trifling transactions, which every one knows as well as he; and retains the recollection of those remote and more important events, the knowledge of which is peculiar to himself. The powers of his body are accommodated to the faculties of his mind. He does not lose his vigour till it would be useless, or a source of uneasiness. He has no more reason to regret the decay of his youthful strength, than the youth has to lament the loss of his childish amusements or his boyish sports. The powers of each are adapted to his desires.

Picture to yourself a wise and benevolent old man, a modern patriarch, seated in the centre of his family, the model and oracle of its various branches, the bond of their union and the arbiter of their differences, the friend and companion of the elder, the mild and indulgent monitor of the young, and the liberal patron of the unfortunate. A firm friend to liberty, civil and religious, but a bulwark against upstart theories, puerile projects, and dangerous innovations. Such a one and only one such I once knew.

With regard to death, no wise and good old man will have cause to fear it. Whatever motives, good or bad, a young man may have for being anxious to live, an old man can feel none but what are selfish and absurd. Though his end must sooner arrive, he is not so frequently

in danger as the young. In fact few men suffer any diminution of happiness from the fear of death, for as hath been well observed by the poet :

“All men think all men mortal but themselves.”

An older writer observes, that the only difference in this respect, between an old man and a young man is, that, the one hopes to live long, the other has realised his hopes: the latter wishes to enjoy old age, the former actually enjoys it—and that we should no more repine at the approach of age, than a farmer at the approach of harvest.

It must be confessed, however, that in ancient times, and among uncivilized people, age enjoyed one of its advantages in greater perfection, than in modern times and enlightened nations—I mean respect. Before the general diffusion of knowledge and the easy means of acquiring it, which we now possess, old men were the repositories of useful learning. Knowledge could not be collected without much labour and the diligence of many years; and when collected, it could not be communicated by books as now. It was locked up in the bosom of the old man, who had spent his life in gathering it—and to him must those who wish to partake of it resort. For the same reason the laws were framed by men of age and experience—and as a consequence of this, they exacted a profound respect for age, and invested the fathers of families with absolute power over their children, even after they were become parents and were growing old. This was the case in the ancient republics; and the same reason operates in the same manner among savage nations; for as all their knowledge is the fruit of personal experience, he who has had most experience has most knowledge. The sage can ascertain the limits of their territory, the history of their tribe in peace or war, the most eligible hunting ground, and the most salubrious springs.

But though this accounts for the neglect with which old persons are sometimes treated, it cannot apologise for it. As nothing can contribute more to the gratification of the aged than deference; so nothing should

give greater pleasure to the young than to pay them attention and respect : and as nothing indicates a more ingenuous mind than filial regard and tenderness for our seniors ; so no quality is a stronger proof of a base and insolent spirit in a youth, than rudely to push them off the stage ; or while they continue to mingle with the world, to treat their infirmities with ridicule and contempt.

Besides many of the circumstances attendant on old age which provoke the mirth of youth, are not only well adapted to an advanced period of life, but even dignified and respectable. Such is that slowness and deliberation with which old men generally begin and prosecute any undertaking ; which gives an air of authority to their deportment, and guards them against those imprudences to which their juniors are so liable, but of which they are so seldom sensible, and those indecencies, which nothing but youthful ignorance and precipitation can excuse—Such too is that obstinacy with which they persevere in any design, or support any opinion that they have once adopted. This is a natural consequence of the deliberation with which they enter on their schemes. A measure coolly considered and wisely determined on should be prosecuted with perseverance : and if in the course of his life a man shall take care to improve his talents and extend his knowledge, neither he nor his friends should regret the tenacity with which he may adhere to his opinions. It is laudable in a young man to be willing to learn, and not reluctant to resign his opinions, because it is probable that his first judgments are erroneous ; his mind too is in full vigour, or daily growing in strength, and should he even change for the worse, he has time and opportunity to correct his error. But an old man is sensible that his best days are past, and that it is better for him to abide by the plan of life and the ideas of things which he has already formed, than to risk a change, which, from the debility of his mind, will probably be for the worse, and which, from the advanced period of his life, he may not have it in his power to retrieve. On the whole, the frailties of age, even the procrastination and obstinacy which we are in the habit

of ridiculing, are wise ordinances of providence ; and when the earlier years of life have not been neglected, they will appear to be valuable qualities. On the other hand, it might be shown that young men are liable to ten thousand follies, from which their seniors are exempt.

It is to be feared, though I am not willing to suspect it, that the superior education enjoyed by the rising generation, may tempt them to undervalue their seniors, and even to treat them with disrespect. This would argue vanity in their own accomplishments, and acquirements, ignorance of the solid and valuable qualities of their parents, and a temper equally ungracious and undutiful. On the contrary, nothing can be more amiable and respectable than the sacrifices made by parents to the improvement and future advancement of their children, at the risk of forfeiting their respect. Compare their honest disinterested pride in the proficiency of their offspring, with the petulant conceit of the young in their superficial knowledge and frivolous accomplishments.

I shall only mention one propensity more to which old men are generally too prone ; but which, when not carried to excess, will admit of some apology—I mean a love for money. When this passion is suffered to grow to excess, when at a time of life that leaves us little room for apprehending that we shall outlive our substance, we indulge a sordid and selfish passion for money, and learn to look upon it as an end, instead of an instrument—nothing can be more mean or contemptible. But it is natural, that, during those years which cannot command respect ; when we are unable to look for society abroad, and require many little comforts at home ; when we must purchase the attentions and activity of friends and servants, and can trust little to our own exertions, we should wish to be independent, to have it in our power to reward fidelity, to acknowledge former kindness, to conciliate new affection :—and if a generous and judicious use be made of wealth, we may easily pardon that anxiety about it, which would otherwise appear inexcusable : for it would be a desperate experiment for an old

person to throw himself entirely on the disinterested attachment of the young.

From the general train of our speculations it would appear.

1. That if we hope for a happy old age, we must prepare for it. It is vain for a man after spending a dissolute life, to expect that he shall enjoy either a sound body or a sound mind when he shall grow old: much less can an ignorant, impious, peevish, brutal debauchee expect to enjoy the affection of friends, to whose gratitude or esteem he has no claim, or the comforts of social intercourse, to which he has nothing to contribute. In such a person, even the natural and pleasing circumstances attendant on old age become ridiculous. What can be more insufferable than the garrulity of one who has nothing to say, that any one chooses to hear: the procrastination of one who is incapable of deliberation; or an obstinate perseverance in what every one sees to be absurd; except it be the morose temper, and the profane and impious conversation of one who has cumbered the ground so long? 2. Hence it appears, that youth is the season in which we should prepare for declining years. As the husbandman must labour in the spring, if he hopes for the produce of autumn or the stores of winter; so we must sow the seeds of affection, gratitude, and respect, when young, if we hope to reap when we are old. We must lay up a store of wisdom and knowledge, if we wish to be provided with them when they shall be wanted.

3. A man has no reason to repine or murmur at the inconveniencies of age, or of the neglect of relations and the desertion of friends, if he has taken no care to form tender and friendly connexions during his youth. No man is obliged to enter into family ties except he choose; but he must not be surprised if his peevish complaints of the ingratitude of the world, and the want of domestic comfort, when in the decline of life excite no pity, if he have devoted his youth and manhood to sordid and selfish enjoyments. As he has thought proper to expend his fortune on his own gratification, and preferred an unsocial independence to the links of natural or conjugal affection; he should at the same time have looked out for some



substitute for these before he becomes the most dependent of mortals. What reason has he to fret and grumble at the mercenary attentions of friends or servants, when he knows that self has been his predominant passion as well as theirs?

4. But it is not sufficient to have contracted such relations. They may become the causes of the bitterest anguish. We must also be careful to perform the duties which they require. A father who has acted the tyrant to his family; and a mother who has obstructed every improvement and cherished every folly in the mind of her children, would be unreasonable in expecting them to be wiser than themselves; or in complaining that they treat them with neglect, or pay them only mercenary attentions; and that they do not reap the fruit of what they never sowed.

5. If a man wishes to enjoy a calm and tranquil old age, he must prepare for it by cultivating a benign and even temper. A passionate man may be borne with, while he possesses agreeable qualities, or is capable of performing eminent services to his friends; but when that period is past, he cannot expect to be endured. His internal composure and the esteem of others, must then arise chiefly from a kind disposition and an easy temper.

6. The solid happiness and respectability of age must be built upon a religious foundation: no other can support the weight of years or resist the flood of time. Though all the comforts which I have enumerated as attendant upon a wise and virtuous old age should fall to our lot, we shall still be in a forlorn condition without religion; and should they be withdrawn, this, alone may supply their place. This will enable us to look death in the face, and even to welcome the king of terrors. A virtuous and pious old man may, without any extraordinary degree of fortitude say, O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory!

ERASMUS,

## VINDICATION OF THE UNITY OF GOD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—In the Postscript to my last communication, I stated that I had requested the Editor of *The Orthodox Presbyterian* to follow the example of your liberality, by publishing Mr. Bagot's letters and mine, consecutively. This request which appeared to me reasonable under the circumstances, he has thought proper virtually to decline. The following is a copy of our correspondence.

“Newry, 17th April, 1832.

“SIR,—I have commenced, in the pages of *The Bible Christian*, a series of letters in reply to the Rev. D. Bagot's lately published Defence of the Trinity.—Mr. Bagot has requested permission to reply, through the same medium, to my letters as they shall be published. This request having been readily and properly acceded to, I am encouraged to request that the same liberal and impartial feeling may induce you to give insertion, consecutively, to the same letters on both sides, in *The Orthodox Presbyterian*.—Let us hope that the cause of Christian truth may be thereby promoted,—a cause which ought to be as dear to you as to the Editor of *The Bible Christian*.—The favour of your reply will oblige your obedient servant,

JOHN MITCHEL.”

“To the Editor of the *Orthodox Presbyterian*.”

“Belfast, 5th May, 1832.

Rev. John Mitchel,

SIR,—In reply to yours of the 17th ult. I am directed to say that the Editors of *The Orthodox Presbyterian*, cannot pledge themselves to publish any thing they have not seen.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WM. M'COMB.”

As *The Orthodox Presbyterian* has not expressly refused insertion to the letters on both sides, he may possibly yet administer my “poison” to the community, unless he has lost all confidence in the “antidote.”—But, though somewhat disappointed by the above reply,

I confess I was rather more so, to find that Mr. Bagot has not availed himself of the privilege which he sought, and readily obtained, from you. He has, possibly, been influenced by an unwillingness to embarrass me, while employed upon his late publication.—Be his notion what it may, I feel that I am, for the present, “a freeman of the forest,” and left at liberty to pursue my own course undisturbed.

In my former letter I offered to the public a few strictures on the general features of Mr. Bagot's production, in reference to the “three Persons” of the Trinity. His statements upon that subject, when brought together, and compared, appear so ill-assorted, and so perfectly conflicting, as to be mutually destructive. Upon this portion of his work, the reader will perceive I have had little more to do, than confront Mr. Bagot with himself, and, by a very simple process, cause him to reply to his own arguments, and overturn his own statements. And whoever has read his book with attention, will see that I might go on to do so at much greater length. For, in truth, he has scarcely laid down a position in any part of his work, in reference to the Persons of the Trinity, which could not be met by statements which he has elsewhere made, that are point-blank and diametrically opposite.—Do I make this assertion, and have I so far confirmed its truth by a comparison of his conflicting statements, for the sole purpose of exposing the inconsistency and self-contradiction of my opponent? Not at all. The course I have pursued is designed to convince the intelligent and honest inquirer, that the doctrine which he has endeavoured to support and vindicate by such conflicting statements, cannot be the doctrine of scripture and of truth:—for the sincere believer in the divine authority of scripture must be persuaded, that, viewed aright, there will not be found any such conflicting statements there.

Turning now to a distinct portion of the subject, wherein Mr. Bagot treats of the nature, office, and personal dignity of the “Son of God,” who is regarded as the second of the three co-equal Persons of the Trinity, his statements will be found equally conflicting and unscriptural.

tural. Having, in his first page, represented "the Son," as one of the three distinct persons who make up the "plurality of persons" in the Godhead; and having there spoken of him as the Supreme God, for he says, "we must believe the Supreme Deity of each;" when he comes, afterwards, to speak of this "Supreme Deity" as descending from his glory, and being clothed in flesh—the views exhibited in his treatise appear to me to be most incoherent and contradictory, and many of them at complete variance with Scripture.

Hampered, as he could not but feel himself, by the uniform language of Christ in the Gospel, Mr. Bagot observes, (page 134,) "Whilst the Son of God was manifest in the flesh, in the person of the man Christ Jesus, it is natural to suppose that he would adopt language adapted to *the change of circumstances* in which he appeared; and hence it is not strange that he should have frequently represented himself as subordinate to the Father."—Without dwelling on the obvious absurdity of supposing a "change of circumstances" in the Supreme Deity, whom the Scriptures constantly represent as unchangeable, "without variableness or shadow of turning;" and without insisting on the confusion which must be thrown over our conceptions of Christ, by Mr. Bagot's representation of his double personality,—being one person as a constituent member of the Godhead, and another, and a very different person as "the man Christ Jesus:" without waiting to argue these points—for it is enough to mention them,—we must agree that it is "natural to suppose" that our Lord should always speak of himself according to truth. But if the truth were, as Trinitarians represent it, that he himself is God equal with the Father; and if this were a truth of such pre-eminent importance as they profess to regard it; would it not be natural to expect also, that our Lord Jesus Christ should have plainly and frequently declared it? Yet we may still ask—what has been often asked, but never answered—where is the passage in which he has ever said either that he was God, or equal with God? We say that we have not met with any such passage; and when we desire to have it pointed out, it cannot be done. Mr. Bagot, it is true, has ob-

served, in his 127th page, that whilst the Son was in a state of humiliation, he "had emptied himself of the form of God, and of the dignities of his pre-existent state," (which, according to his view, must mean, *whilst he had ceased to be God!*) "the Father retained his glory as one of the persons of the Godhead; and therefore possessed a *temporary superiority* in glory to the Son." But this doctrine of transmutation in the Godhead, —this shifting of character in the Deity, or in the persons constituting the Deity, must appear very strange to ordinary readers of the Bible. We ask such persons—we ask any person of common intelligence, how is it possible to reconcile such statements with the Scripture doctrine of the One unchangeable God? We ask, with what hope of success can any one undertake to render the ideas of *temporary superiority*, and *perfect equality*, consistent with each other? Mr. Bagot's attempt to effect an impossibility has proved, as might be expected, a signal failure. He endeavours to remove this difficulty by his own fiction of a mere "*official subordination*," whilst at the same time he insists on a real equality. He observes, in page 134, "we hold that the Son acted in perfect obedience to the will of the Father, in becoming Mediator; and that, *as such*, he is subordinate to the Father:" although in the very next page he tells us—with what consistency let the reader judge—that Christ "could not have assumed the office of Mediator, if he did not possess all the attributes and resources of Godhead:" in one breath, as it were, making him God and subordinate to God. But yet, forgetting, I suppose, what he has said here, he does not hesitate afterwards to tell us, in his 146th page, and, as he alleges, on the authority of the Apostle Paul, that "the subjection of the son will not take place until *after the termination of his mediatorial kingdom*." What marvellous confusion is here! And how are such contradictory statements to be reconciled? Our author tells us, at one time, that the Son is subordinate to the Father, *only as Mediator*; and again he tells us, that this very subjection is to take place, *only when he has ceased to be Mediator!* Does he really expect that readers of any discrimination will receive from him,



without question, declarations such as these;—declarations which must appear to be as diametrically opposed to each other, as east and west? The Bible Christian will judge for himself which of them is opposed to Scripture.

In reply to an observation of mine, Mr. Bagot has observed, in his 152d page, that “the language of our Saviour (John xii. 49.) ‘I have not spoken of myself, &c.’ is not one of those instances [as I had alleged,] in which Christ is supposed, according to the Trinitarian hypothesis, to speak in his human nature. It was in reference (he says,) to his official character as Mediator.” From this it is evident Mr. Bagot conceives our Lord to possess three distinct natures, and to sustain three distinct characters,—as God, as man, and as Mediator between God and men:—although in page 113 he distinctly asserts that the “*Man Christ Jesus*” is the “*one Mediator* between God and man.” Now, supposing this view to be correct, it may be asked, by what rule has Mr. Bagot ascertained when our Lord speaks or acts in any one of these characters as distinct from the other? If it be true that Christ presented himself among men in this threefold capacity, would it not be reasonable to expect, that either he himself, or some of his inspired Apostles, should have afforded us some clue, that might lead us into the true interpretation of his teaching and conduct; and enable us to distinguish what properly belongs to his first character, what to his second, and what to his third. The readers of St. Paul’s Epistles will recollect the distinction of this kind which *he* has carefully made with respect to his own teaching. When he is not speaking as an inspired Apostle, he takes special care candidly to apprise us of it, in such terms as these: “I speak as a man.” Rom. iii. 5; or, “I speak this by permission, and not of commandment;” or, “unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord:—but to the rest speak I, not the Lord.” 2 Cor. vii. 6, 10, 12. This was candid; this was honest and explicit. Now, I repeat it, how shall we account for it, that our great Teacher (supposing Mr. Bagot’s account of his several natures and characters to be correct,) has not, with equal candour and explicitness as his Apostle, afforded

us a similar key to unlock the difficulties which must present themselves upon this view of his distinct natures and offices—standing, as they must, at an immense distance from each other? That neither he himself, nor one commissioned by him, has supplied this key, you need not be informed. But, what we look for in vain in the Holy Scriptures, we shall find ready to our hands in Mr. Bagot's treatise, or any other on the same system; though whence it comes, or how it is procured, neither he, nor any one else, can tell. In reading our Lord's discourses recorded in the Gospels, any plain mind unwarp-ed by human creeds, will be impressed with the persuasion that Christ our great Teacher, spake,—not in two or three distinct characters and natures, as Mr. Bagot would persuade us; but in the single character of the Messiah, the Son of God anointed and sent of the Father to be the Saviour of the world.

It is plain, that whatever view may be taken of the nature and dignity of Christ, will very materially affect the view which must be taken of his death, considered as a sacrifice for sin. I believe it is admitted by all professing Christians, that "Jesus Christ the righteous, is the propitiation for the sins of the world;" and that the death of this innocent and spotless Lamb of God upon the cross, as a sacrifice for sin, exhibiting as it did, the most ample manifestation of the love and compassion of God for a perishing world, in the not sparing his beloved Son, but delivering him up unto death for us all,—is to be regarded as the very engine of reconciliation between God and men. But the main difference between Calvinists and others on this point seems to be,—that whilst Calvinists believe that the sacrifice of Christ *reconciled God to sinful men*,—other Christians are accustomed to regard it as the instrument graciously appointed, and wisely calculated, *to reconcile sinful man to God*. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God had sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The death of Christ, you see, is not exhibited to us in Scripture, and should not, therefore, be represented by us, as the pro-

curing cause of the Father's love:—on the contrary, the Father's love is every where in Scripture held forth, and should accordingly be ever regarded by us, as the procuring cause of the mediation and death of Christ, and of all the invaluable blessings thereby secured to the true believer. The gracious design, the blessed effect of the whole arrangements of the Gospel covenant, accordingly, is—not to reconcile God to man;—*that is not what is wanted*; but, on the contrary, to reconcile man to God;—*that is what is wanted*. It is man who is alienated and at enmity with his Maker; and the merciful design of the coming, and of the death of Christ, is just to do away that enmity; and the earnest entreaty of the Gospel of Christ, is just this,—“Be ye reconciled unto God.” This seems to me to be the Scripture view,—but it is not the Calvinistic view—of that atonement or reconciliation which is effected by the death of Christ. Whether Mr. Bagot hold the Calvinistic view of this doctrine, it would, perhaps, be difficult to determine, from his book. But upon the subject of the death of Christ, he has published a number of exceedingly incoherent statements. Take the following as a sample.—In page 133 he observes, “the Son is manifested as having assumed our nature, in order to consummate the work of our redemption, for which purpose he came down from heaven, *and was made man in order to die* as a sacrifice for the guilty.” “For we do not mean,” he observes, two pages after, “to maintain the deity of Jesus of Nazareth, who was born in Bethlehem,” and was thus “*made man in order to die* as a sacrifice for the guilty.” It is obvious that in these passages the object of the writer must have been, to confine the suffering of death to that “Jesus of Nazareth” whose deity, he says, he does not maintain; that is, to Jesus considered only in his human nature: the plain meaning of which is, that Christ died *merely as a “man.”* And this I take to be the general sentiment upon this point, among Trinitarians possessing any intelligence. But who does not see how nearly this sentiment assimilates their creed to that of the lowest Humanitarian, who professes to regard Jesus as a “man” in union with God? In a subsequent part of his treatise, however, where

he has a different purpose to serve, Mr. Bagot plainly represents the death of Christ in a point of view most materially different,—indeed, diametrically opposite. For there it is clearly the writer's conviction, that Christ suffered and died, not merely *as man*, but also *as God* ! “It is necessary” he observes, page 171, “to believe in the Supreme Deity of the Saviour, in order that his death may be regarded as an *adequate expression of God's hatred of sin.*” “Would the death of a *finite and created being*” he asks, “afford to the inhabitants of God's moral universe, a sufficient indication of the estimate which he forms of transgression?” “But admit the *Deity of Christ,*” he adds, and then all these purposes, he thinks, are served. “*The Deity of Christ,*” he subjoins, “is *absolutely necessary*, in order to give value to the atonement which he has effected upon the cross.” Above, one would think Mr. Bagot meant to confine the suffering of death to the *man Christ Jesus* : but in these latter passages he evidently extends it to what he believes to be the “*Deity of Christ.*” Now, here is a doctrine, which I had hoped there was no sensible Christian of the present day who would be either weak enough, or hardy enough to avow. Here are “transgressions of infinite enormity,” committed by a *finite creature*,—but which, (according to Mr. Bagot,) can be expiated only by an *infinite sacrifice*, and that sacrifice *nothing less than the death of the Infinite and Eternal God !!!* My pen trembles in my hand while I note down a doctrine, at once so abhorrent to the feelings of our nature, and so utterly destitute of the slightest support in divine Revelation. The idea which the Holy Scriptures give me of the doctrine of Atonement is, no doubt, considerably different from that which Mr. Bagot entertains ; but I am puzzled beyond measure in endeavouring to determine whether it be possible that he can believe in an atonement at all ; seeing he has determined that it cannot possibly be effected by the death of any “*finite and created being,*” but only by the *sacrifice and death of the only Being who is uncreated and infinite* ; that is, *by the death of a Being who cannot die !*—If such be his view of the subject, he is right in avowing it ; but I trust, and am persuaded, he will find very few intelligent Christians to join him in it.

Mr. Bagot, in his 166th page, has thought proper to question my view of the doctrine of Atonement, and indeed, to doubt whether I hold it at all. "It would be very difficult to prove that the Author maintains the doctrine of Atonement, by the death of Christ." And in the next page he asserts, that I "cannot possibly use the word 'Atonement' in the same sense in which the New Testament employs that term." The question for us all to settle, is, in what sense does the New Testament employ that term? In the first place, that term, however frequent in the mouths of Christians now, is found to be employed in our translation of the New Testament no more than once, (Romans, v. 11.) and there the Greek term (*τὴν καταλλαγὴν*) so translated, is in the margin more correctly rendered "Reconciliation;" and this is the term by which it is properly translated wherever it occurs elsewhere in the New Testament. Take as an example, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20. "All things are of God, who hath *reconciled* us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of *reconciliation*; to wit, that God was, in Christ *reconciling* the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of *reconciliation*. Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye *reconciled* to God." In the whole of this passage, the words printed in Italics are the correct rendering of the above Greek term in its different forms; and I repeat it, that this term is never rendered otherwise in the New Testament, except in Rom. v. 11. This, I think, should be sufficient to settle the "*sense in which the New Testament employs that term.*" This, therefore, is the only sense in which I would presume to employ it; and whenever I speak of "atonement," I would be understood simply to mean, *reconciliation to God*, through the death of his Son. Those who are accustomed to my ministry, and those who have candidly read my sermons, are aware that these are my sentiments upon the subject. I have not withheld or concealed the sentiments which I entertain; and nothing should tempt me to go beyond the teaching of Scripture on such a subject. I think it is my sincere desire to give



that importance to the death of Christ, as the medium of our reconciliation to God, which I find given to it every where in the New Testament : and if Mr. Bagot, or any other person, or number of persons, choose to go farther than the New Testament, or to put any other construction on the death of Christ than what we meet with there, I may lament such departure from the plain doctrine of Gospel ; but as I cannot find in the word of God, I am neither disposed to receive it, nor shall I ever dare to communicate it.

I hope in my next to finish this series of strictures upon Mr. Bagot's defence of the Trinity ; after which I design, if spared, to furnish a plain and consecutive view of the Scripture doctrine of the Unity of God, as distinguished from his Trinity. Meanwhile I am, Mr. Editor, faithfully yours,

JOHN MITCHEL.

---

#### A PRAYER,

*Designed for the Use of Young Persons previous to partaking of the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper.*

O Thou, Almighty and ever present God, my most merciful Father in heaven, to whom the most secret imaginations of my heart are known—who art witness to all that I do, or say, or think—to whom I must therefore have exposed so many frailties—so many sinful thoughts—so many unjustifiable desires : to Thee would I, with all humility, pray for the forgiveness of the same through thy mercy, as manifested in Christ the Lord : and while I pray for pardon through him, may my soul ever gratefully acknowledge thy infinite long-suffering and tender mercy in sending him into a sinful world with power to forgive sins ; and his unspeakable love to the children of men, that made him for our sakes endure such contradiction of sinners, such cruel sufferings and an agonizing death. Cast me not off, O Lord, for the sins which I have committed, but accept of my penitence : pardon my transgressions, and graciously supply me with strength that will enable me to persevere more steadily in what thy word teaches me to be the true and the right way ; to have a more deep con-

viction that Thou art present at all times, in all my busy and all my idle hours ; and with these impressions on my heart, to endeavour in all things to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before thee my Father and my God.

More especially at this season, when I am about to partake of that Ordinance which our Lord Jesus Christ appointed to be observed in remembrance of himself, may I be assisted by thy grace in my endeavours so to turn my thoughts to meditation on his sinless character, so to train my affections to an earnest desire to imitate his perfect example, that I may derive from my participation of the Lord's Supper that confirmation of my faith in him—that strengthening of my good resolutions—that peace of mind—that hope of pardon to my sins, which will be useful to me throughout my life ; and may I bear more especially in mind at this time, that I must forgive if I expect to be forgiven, in order that I may come before Thee without an uncharitable feeling towards any of my fellow creatures. For thy assistance in this and every other duty required of me, would I humbly pray. Hear me, O my Father ! and grant what thou seest best for me ; for I would bow before thee as the disciple of thy Son, and in thankfulness for the invaluable privileges and hopes that I enjoy through him : through whom, and for whom, be praise and glory unto Thee for ever and ever—Amen.

---

#### LETTER ON RELIGIOUS CONFERENCES.

TO \* \* \* ,

*Dublin, May, 1832.*

SIR,—You have expressed a wish to know something respecting the weekly conferences held in the vestry of Strand-street Meeting House ; and, however incompetent to the task, I readily comply with your desire, because I am persuaded that much good may be accomplished by means apparently insignificant, and that in order to excite zeal in others, we should evince it ourselves.

Cork and Dublin are, I believe, the only places in Ireland where Unitarians hold a kind of meeting for

mutual religious edification, which has been appropriately styled *Conference*, because the object is to confer together. Cork led the way in this useful path, and during the last year, as shewn by the annual report, no less than fifty of these truly interesting meetings took place, in which a number of questions vitally important to religion were amicably discussed, and much useful information diffused.

Controversy is not the object of these meetings: it is therefore as much discouraged as possible; nor is strict unanimity of sentiment sought after; for each individual with his Bible in his hand, is called upon to judge for himself, not blindly to adopt every opinion he may hear set forth. What, then, is the object of the conference, if it be neither controversy nor conversion? Simply, to encourage a diligent searching of the Scriptures, by affording an easy channel for seeking and imparting information connected with them, and to promote mutual edification on religious subjects by discussion. I cannot better explain how this is accomplished than by giving a slight detail of our proceedings.

The Conference consists of ladies and gentlemen, chiefly members of the congregation; strangers are admitted, but in order to avoid the risk of unprofitable controversy, are not allowed to speak without the permission of the President. The meeting commences by the President reading the minutes of the preceding conference, which had been taken down by the Secretary; then the first text, portion of Scripture, or subject on the list for discussion, is read, and any person is at liberty to deliver his or her sentiments; but as long speeches are not desirable, it is understood that ten minutes at one time should not be exceeded. When it is considered that the question has been sufficiently investigated, the President proceeds to read another text, and so on according to the wishes of those present. Sometimes three or four texts will be discussed at one Conference, at other times one subject will be so interesting as to require being adjourned to the next meeting. Previous to separating, the texts for the ensuing night's discussion are handed to the Secretary. Any one is at liberty to propose a text or subject. The meeting is then closed by a psalm and a short prayer.

The great object of the whole proceeding is to rouse a spirit of inquiry into Scripture truth—to call forth the best powers of the mind on subjects of the deepest interest to man, and, above all, to give the Bible a *real*, not merely a nominal share in our thoughts and affections. Among those who read and study the sacred volume, (for I fear there are many, many who neglect this duty) there are few who do not occasionally find difficulties which they would wish to have cleared up; now, the Conference is often a ready means of doing this; and though the result may not always be perfectly satisfactory, yet the pursuit of truth is in itself a healthful, useful, mental exercise. Persons who merely hear a few chapters of the Bible read on Sundays, are quite ignorant of the vast pleasure to be derived from a closer investigation of this immense repository of information,—historical, antiquarian, literary, moral, and above all, religious.

It has been objected to these Conferences, that they tend to draw forth speculative opinions, to raise doubts, and direct the mind to the obscurities, and difficulties of the Gospel, rather than to its more useful practical precepts. This assertion is more plausible than true; it assumes that the members are more disposed to speculate, than to investigate with candour, and it implies that the Bible cannot stand this sifting without risk to our faith,—a position than which nothing can be more dangerous. As well might these objectors cavil at the pulpit, and declaim against its dangerous influence on society, because it has often been made the organ of political and religious persecution, as maintain that members of a Christian congregation meeting together with the Bible in their hands, to search out its sacred treasures are in danger of injuring themselves by running into vain speculations. It is true that every assembly of individuals for discussion, can give a tone to their proceedings by the spirit which they allow to influence them. What then should be the spirit presiding among Christians, assembled to inquire after the truth? Certainly not a disputatious, dogmatising, intolerant spirit; but a spirit that excites to a manly, fearless, candid searching of the Scriptures—for in them we have the words of eternal life—with a perfect confidence in the wisdom and goodness of God,

and great diffidence of our own powers when applied to the contemplation of his works and dispensations ; for “ here we see only in part, and know in part.”

In short, sir, the Conferences in Strand-street Meeting House, afford a delightful mental exercise on religious subjects ; and not unfrequently our warmest devotional feelings are excited by some appeal from our worthy President, who occasionally reads us an article illustrative of the subject under discussion, or connected with the furtherance of Unitarianism. We wish to be able to give “ an account of the hope that is in us ;” to work a little at our own instruction, and not depend altogether upon our ministers ; to show that we can amicably differ on minor points, while we agree in receiving the Bible and nothing but the Bible, as our rule of faith ; acknowledge its all-pervading doctrine to be the Unity of God, and endeavour to illustrate practically the spiritual fellowship that ought to exist among fellow-hearers, and fellow-communicants. We reject any thing approaching to—so called—evangelical cant, or pharisaical sanctimoniousness ; we discourage vain speculations ; we avoid controversy, deeming it better managed by divines ; but we search—fearlessly search the Scriptures ; we help each other in throwing light on obscurities ; we refresh each other by pointing out beauties, and we endeavour, by mutual assistance and forbearance to strengthen the bands of christian charity and brotherly love.

Such are our views ; and feeling, as I do, the happy influence of these helps to religious knowledge, I would hail with delight the establishment of similar Conferences in every Unitarian congregation in Ireland, and I consider them particularly well calculated for the intelligence, inquisitiveness, and Scriptural taste of the Northerners. But, sir, they should originate with, and be chiefly conducted by the laity, aided no doubt by their minister, but chiefly dependent on the energies of the people, the wealthy bringing their rich stores of learning, the unlettered their plain useful supply of common sense, and all a feeling of piety and zeal in a good cause.

Excuse the length of these observations ; when the heart dictates, it is well known, the hand often too readily obeys.

A MEMBER OF STRAND-ST. MEETING.



## REMARK ON THE REPORT OF THE IRISH UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY.

ALTHOUGH much gratified by the account which the Committee of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society has been enabled to give to the general meeting lately held in Dublin of its labours, its prospects and its success, I confess that I read one paragraph in the report with feelings of pain, and that I deeply regret that any such statement should have been presented to the society, or published under its sanction. The passage to which I refer is the following on which I beg leave to offer a few remarks :—

“The Ulster Unitarian Christian Tract Society, from causes not explained, has not adhered to its original intention of connecting itself with this Society, though it contemplates the maintenance of a friendly correspondence. In consequence of this resolution, your Committee have been led to relax their exertions in the North of Ireland, and to concede that field of labour to the sister institution, established on the spot. Impressed however with the great importance of well-organized co-operation among the Unitarians of Ireland, they cannot refrain from expressing their earnest hope, that their Ulster brethren will yet connect themselves with your Society by some more definite bond than occasional intercourse.”

The first observation which occurs to the mind in perusing the foregoing extract, is that it shows its authors to be ignorant of the very name of the Society which is the subject of censure. There is no such society as the “*Ulster Unitarian Christian Tract Society*.” We have indeed in Belfast, a Society called the “*Unitarian Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge* ;” and this I presume is the one to which the Report refers. But when our Dublin friends declare that the Northern Society, “*from causes not explained*, has not adhered to its original intention” of connecting itself with theirs, they bring an accusation of inconsistency which has no foundation in fact. Supposing even that we had entertained at one time the intention which is attributed to us, and had afterwards been led to relinquish it,—it would have been fair and candid to allow us to do so without reprehension; for although we might not have felt ourselves called on to explain to them our reasons for the change of purpose, it would have been but common charity to take it for granted

that reason existed which to us appeared to be sufficient, and which must therefore govern our conduct. But so far was the Unitarian Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge from contemplating any connexion with the Association in Dublin, of the kind alluded to, that at its very first meeting, the meeting at which our Society was formed, the following resolution was moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to :—

“ That this society, *though holding itself independent*, shall correspond with the Irish, the British and Foreign, and the American Unitarian Association, and all others having in view the extension of rational Christianity.”

Surely this extract proves that in holding itself distinct from the Irish Unitarian Christian Society, the Unitarian Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge has adhered to its original intention, and to its original declarations. And if it were necessary to argue the point, it could be shown without much difficulty that in so doing it has done wisely for the cause in which both are labouring. It would, in my opinion, be well for each of the two Societies to exert itself to the utmost in the field of its own influence; to assist and strengthen and encourage its fellow labourer; and to abstain from throwing out censures which are sometimes unjust, generally uncalled for, and always disagreeable.

Near the close of the Report the Committee say,—  
 “ It is impossible that such admirable heralds of truth as the Monthly Repository for England, and the Christian Pioneer for Scotland, can fail to prepare the way for a rapid diminution of prejudice, and the wide diffusion of a better faith.” I presume it is owing to inadvertence merely, that the Committee of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society have omitted all mention of the *Bible Christian*, the only periodical publication in *Ireland* conducted upon Unitarian principles; one which possesses a circulation probably ten times as great as the united Irish circulation of the Repository and Pioneer; and which if it does not deserve the glowing eulogium pronounced upon its cotemporaries, has at least the merit of having done much good, and promises to be the means of much more. Surely in their concern for the diminution of prejudice, and the wide diffusion of

a better faith in England and Scotland, the Committee need not overlook entirely those who are engaged in the same work at home, with inferior abilities perhaps, but with equal zeal, and not inferior success.

Sincerely rejoicing in the good which has been effected by means of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society—rejoicing likewise in the encouraging prospects which are now opened up to it—sympathising as I shall always do in its exertions—ardently desirous as I am for a strenuous and active co-operation between both Societies when any occasion may call for it, I must deprecate reflections of the kind which I have referred to. But I do so without resentment. On the contrary no person can be more desirous of promoting the interests of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society than—

A MEMBER OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY FOR THE  
DIFFUSION OF CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

---

#### MEETING OF THE IRISH UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY.

*(From the Christian Pioneer.)*

“ The Second Anniversary of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society, was held in Dublin on Sunday and Monday, April 29 and 30. On the afternoon of that day, a Sermon was preached in Eustace-street Meeting-house; and in the evening, another in Strand-street, by Rev. George Harris of Glasgow. His impressive and eloquent advocacy of Unitarian Christianity, as exhibited in its practical bearings on the progress of society and the interests of mankind, will long be remembered by his hearers with delight. The Annual Meeting was held in Strand-street, on the morning of Monday, April 30. The numbers in attendance exceeded those who were present last year; and a deep interest seemed to be awakened by the proceedings. At one o'clock, Joseph Hone, Esq. was called to the chair. The Report having been read and received.

“ Rev. Joseph Hutton moved, and Rev. James Armstrong seconded the following Resolution:

“ That the thanks of this meeting be given to Rev. George Harris for his eloquent and impressive Sermons, delivered yesterday in behalf of this Society.”

Mr. Harris expressed the gratification he felt, in being honoured by the approbation of so enlightened an assembly; and being called on by the Secretary, moved the following Resolution, accompanied by various observations: “ That the Members of this Society, contrasting the present state of Unitarian Christianity, with its aspect in the days of the persecuted Emlyn, find reason for much gratitude to the Father of lights; but comparing its still depressed condition

with its holy and benignant character, we feel ourselves impelled by solemn obligation to renewed efforts in the dissemination of a faith, tending to bring glory to God, love to Christ, and peace to men."

Mr. William Porter, the present Treasurer and Secretary of the Society, seconded the Resolution. After noticing the conduct of the Remonstrants of Ulster, Mr. Porter said, "But we have had men whose sacrifices for the sake of truth were infinitely greater—men who, against principalities and powers, against penal statutes and public odium, against arbitrary judges and subservient juries, against fine and imprisonment, maintained alike the right of private judgment, and the opinions to which its exercise had led them; and who flung property to the winds, and snapped asunder every cord that tied them to the earth; and who would not have accounted their lives dear unto them, in comparison with the manly and fearless assertion of what they in their consciences believed to be the truth once delivered to the saints;—the persecuted Emlyn, whose memory has been honoured by our reverend guest, and others of his sterling stamp, the goodly fellowship of our confessors—the noble army of our martyrs. We must not congratulate the Remonstrants of the North, as if their warfare was accomplished; we must not hail those who buckle on their armour, as those who put it off. They have nobly freed themselves from hindrances hard to be shaken from them; they have placed themselves unencumbered at the starting-post, from whence I trust they will press onward toward the mark; but we should not lead them to suppose that the goal has yet been reached. In no part of Ireland have Unitarians done their duty to the cause. Many reasons might be assigned for the prevailing apathy, but I shall confine myself to one which strikes me as very influential. Exertions are not made to disseminate Unitarianism in Ireland, because it is considered that all exertions of the kind are hopeless. Difficulties do, no doubt, beset the path." [After sketching these difficulties, arising from the anomalous state of Ireland as to its religious parties, Mr. Porter proceeded]. "But what reformation ever took place, which did not triumph over obstacles far greater than these? A thousand avenues are open, through which we might throw both Unitarian publications and Unitarian preaching into the public mind. We profess to hold the powers of human nature in respect; we protest against Calvinism, because, in our opinion, it calumniates them; and yet we practically avow our conviction, that plain, rational, scriptural demonstrations, submitted with kindness to the consideration of the public, will produce no good effect whatever! I ask, in the name of common consistency, should these things be? Sir, the course is open before us; and it is only timidity that sees a lion in the path. But if we are content to be Unitarians of a certain class, that is to say, persons who go to meeting once a-week, because it is seemly to go somewhere—who have a few favourite phrases constantly in their mouths, about allowing every man to go his own way to heaven—who delight to dwell upon the evils of controversy, when prevailing error is about to be assailed—who are ready to make the most charitable allowances for a popular system of divinity, but are signally severe in their judg-

ments upon any which appears to be at all more unpopular than their own—who coldly sanction a form of worship, for the dissemination of which, they scruple to afford one penny of their money, or one hour of their time,—if we are content to be Unitarians of this description, I have no great expectation of success. To what purpose should you urge such an individual, to promote the objects which we have in view? Gallio careth for none of these things. But if the Unitarians of Ireland could be roused from their indifference; if a miracle could be wrought, and the dry bones live, much honest prejudice might be overcome, and much dishonest clamour effectually put down, by a firm, unflinching avowal of our opinions.

“In considering the course which we ought to pursue in the advocacy of our sentiments, I have often thought that the respective conduct of two celebrated men in the sister island, both of whom embraced Unitarianism, and desired to propagate what they had embraced, might furnish an instructive lesson. In one of the most enlightened periods of English History, when opinions upon many important subjects had been weighed in the balance, and many of them found wanting—when in politics the glorious Revolution had preserved a nation’s liberties—when Newton and Locke, those Unitarian worthies on whom Mr. Harris passed such a splendid panegyric, had brought under subjection the worlds of nature and of mind—it was to be expected that theology, though always hanging back, should nevertheless participate in the general advance. Accordingly, a man of the most profound and varied talents—a most accomplished scholar—in metaphysics, the worthy antagonist of Leibnitz—a distinguished favourite with royalty—and the most popular preacher of his day, became a believer in the simple unity of the great First Cause, whose being and attributes he had previously demonstrated, in a noble work which still maintains its pristine reputation. I allude to Dr. Samuel Clarke. Now, with respect to religious institutions, the Doctor was a bit-by-bit reformer. The ‘Scripture doctrine of the Trinity,’ is written with an evident disposition to excite as few prejudices as possible. It sought to win the Church to Unitarianism by affecting to find Unitarianism in the standards of the Church. And this course seemed for a time to prosper. If the Convocation murmured, Clarke strove to soothe the Convocation; and he gathered so many personal influences about himself and his opinions, that the latter were thought to have spread far and wide. But what finally became of this attempt to smuggle truth unawares into the Establishment—this attempt to put the new wine into the old bottles, the new doctrine into the old creeds? What became of the Feathers’ Petition, and the two hundred and fifty ministers that signed it—the pamphlets of Archdeacon Blackburne—and the speeches of Sir George Saville? With the exception of Lindsey, Jebb, and Wakefield, who manfully seceded, what became of all the rest? Of the many who were healed, how was it that these alone appeared to give thanks? Unitarianism, Sir, at that period, sprung up quickly; but because it had no root, in fearless consistent profession, it withered. In an after day, another



champion, less cautious in his tactics, issued from the ranks of the orthodox Dissenters, and as long as the highest moral worth united to an ardent longing after truth, shall command respect, the name of Priestley must be held in reverence. This great man adopted a course of proceeding, the reverse of that pursued by Dr. Clarke. He cried aloud and spared not. With him there was no attempt to conciliate persons or principles which he felt it his duty to denounce; and at first the results appeared to be disastrous. He was blamed by timid friends for his imprudence—he was assailed by open enemies for his presumption—he was exposed to the attacks of adverse parties, to the high church intolerance of Horsely, and the sceptic sneer of Gibbon; a half religious, half political mob, destroyed at Birmingham his literary and scientific property; a social persecution followed him to London, with unremitted virulence, and he was at length driven from a country of which he was an ornament, to seek a shelter in a foreign land. But what was the ultimate effect of all this? We may read it in the flourishing state of Unitarianism in England, and in the cheering progress which it has made in America, to which the storms of persecution carried the seeds of truth. Channing has done much, but he entered in some degree into the labours of Priestley in the New World, where Unitarian principles promise to be as permanent as the phenomena of her external nature, and those who seek to overthrow them, might as well attempt to shoulder the Andes from their base, or turn again the Mississippi to its source. I trust that the friends of truth in this country, will be animated by the same decided spirit. Depend upon it, temporising will serve us nothing. Instead of conciliating opposition, it invariably increases dogmatism. If, whilst our opponents are bold, confident, and sweeping in their statements, we begin to doubt, and hesitate, and draw distinctions, and advocate the truth as if we were apologising for error, the truth will win no conquests. Are your opinions false? Speak out, they will be the more speedily refuted. Are your opinions true? Speak out, they will be the sooner recognised. May our ministers universally be convinced, that it is their duty to attach their flocks by the enduring bond of principle; and that all ties of a nature merely personal, are at best but flaxen cords. May they universally perceive that a community of feeling, and, on some important points, a community of faith, are the only cement which can bind a church permanently together; and that when we endeavour to substitute any other preparation, we do but daub the wall with untempered mortar. In my opinion, we should canvass the errors which surround us with spirit and freedom. We cannot do justice to our own views, without contrasting them with those of others. The part of Moses naturally precedes the part of Joshua. You must first lead out the people from the house of bondage, and then introduce them to the promised land."

In proposing the next Resolution, "That the Unitarian faith is embodied in the 'Bible and the whole Bible;' that consequently it intimately connects itself with the great principle of the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures; that in the dissemination of the Sacred

Writings, its professors have rejoiced to find an object of religious benevolence, in which they could cordially unite with all other denominations of the Protestant world; and that, while we regret the recent attempt to exclude them by a doctrinal test, from the continuance of this union, we observe with satisfaction the spirit with which it has been rejected by the Committee of the Hibernian Bible Society;”—the Rev. Dr. Drummond, after depicting in glowing terms the beneficial effects which had resulted from the establishment of the Bible Society, proceeded as follows:—“Protestants of all denominations were invited to unite their efforts in the holy cause, and numbers of them all, or almost all, were admitted to take a part in the proceedings of the Society. For a time the distinctions of what are called orthodoxy and heterodoxy were laid aside, and all seemed willing to be actuated only by principles of Christian philanthropy. The dark clouds of sectarianism and bigotry began to be dispelled from the religious atmosphere, and the genius of Christianity came forth beautiful and brilliant as a star in the firmament, that has ‘bathed its glittering forehead in the ocean and new-tricked its beams,’ and was seen for a time, by the wrapt eye of faith and hope, radiating a cheering light, and shedding a benignant influence on the heads and the hearts of men.

“But this happy state was not ordained to last. The glorious vision passed away; it melted into thin air. The spirit of ANTI-CHRIST was disturbed. And as he is said to have insinuated himself into the garden of Eden, to blight that felicity which he could not participate; so he determined to creep into the Bible Society, to create confusion, and to scatter among the sons of peace, the fiery seeds of discord and rebellion against the Most High. Under the mask of superior sanctity, and in the guise of one who pretended that he had eaten of the tree of knowledge, and had his eyes opened to distinguish between good and evil, he entered their councils, and began to whisper that their sanctified body was tainted with the poison of heresy—the leprous and soul-destroying heresy; that they ought to undergo a purgation; that the heretics should be expelled; and, to guard against their re-admission, a test of orthodoxy should be administered to every member of the holy conclave. The EVIL ONE having thus infused the venom of his serpent tongue into the bosom of his elect, left it to work and ferment; and it wrought and fermented according to his wishes. At last, some whom he had made his confidants and the organs of his counsels, had the assurance, in defiance of all shame, to give utterance to his wicked suggestions, and propose that a belief in the Trinity should be adopted as the test of membership by the Bible Society!

“This proposition was in direct violation of the principle on which the Bible Society was founded. It was annexing to the Bible a note of portentous sound—a comment of most anti-biblical, most anti-christian tendency—an audacious attempt to overthrow a system whose peculiar beauty and utility lay in the broad principle on which it was based. That such a proposition should have been a subject of discussion in the Bible Society, nay, that it was

not met at once by a universal burst of indignation and scorn, is a matter of reproach. After a stormy meeting, which a reverend gentleman who was present, compared to a bear-garden, the motion was lost, and the Bible Society rescued from ruin and everlasting opprobrium.

“ Foiled in their endeavours to overthrow, and to pollute with their slime, the beautiful creation of the Foreign and British Bible Society, the adversaries resolved to form a Society of their own, which they baptized with the waters of contention, the bitter waters of Marah and Meribah—*The Trinitarian Bible Society*. They had now got a bantling of their own to nurse, and might indulge many a glowing anticipation of its future beauty, and its future strength, when it was to come forth like Samson to smite down the Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass—or rather, like a man of Gath, to defy the armies of the living God. But, lo! while they are yet gazing and gaping with parental delight on their baby giant, they behold with amazement and horror, that it is speckled like a viper—dotted all over, from top to toe, with the plague-spots of the Irving heresy! And to add to their horror and mortification, they heard their first-born denounced, sneered at, and ridiculed, even by some of the sanctified fraternity, as a *lusus naturæ*, a monstrous miscreation—the ricketty abortion of bigotry and folly.

“ The same anti-christian spirit which wrought in England, extended its baleful influence to our own island; and attempts, though of a less public nature, similar in wickedness and folly to those made in London, were made to subvert the Hibernian Bible Society. The good sense and Christian feeling of this Society, united to a regard for principle and consistency, baffled those attempts, and it is to be hoped, will continue to baffle them, should they ever be repeated. Trinitarians are fond of boasting, to their shame, that no Socinians—meaning Unitarians, for they are fond of nicknames—are ever admitted to their counsels, or to any share in the management of their affairs. This is assuredly not fair. They who are members of the Society—who are acknowledged to be such by the receipt of their subscriptions—who have always evinced an honest desire to act faithfully to the principles on which the Society was constituted—and who, in the purity of their morals and the rectitude of their conduct, will not shrink from a comparison with the best of the exclusionists—ought to have their representatives in the committee and on the ‘platform.’ Whence so much anxiety to exclude them? Have they, in any mode, rendered themselves unworthy of the holy brotherhood? Have they ever betrayed the great principle of the Bible Society, and made use of an influence derived from their connexion with that Society, to circulate tracts and comments in support of their peculiar doctrines? Have they distributed the Bible without note or comment with the right hand, while, with the left, they were scattering their creeds, articles, and confessions of faith? Had they one face for the privy council, and another for public exhibition? Have they, at any time, claimed precedence of men

their superiors in virtue and learning; or used an undue influence to keep an orthodox brother in the back-ground, and to plunge him in the deepest shade, lest being discovered, he might become an object of that popular regard which the orthodox are so anxious to monopolise? Unitarians know well how they have been treated by Bible Societies; and assuredly they cannot boast that it has been according to the golden rule of Christianity. But they scorned to complain. If good were done, they remained satisfied. They were little ambitious of distinction among the orators of the Rotunda. They rejoiced to know that the Bible was distributed, conscious that the Bible is their most powerful and efficient advocate. The projectors of the Trinitarian Bible Society, have given Unitarians the most decisive triumph. They have virtually sealed their testimony to the truth of Unitarian Christianity. Whence their anxiety to form a Trinitarian Society, and make a profession of belief in the Trinity the condition of membership? Whence, but from a consciousness that the Bible is a Unitarian book? Whence, but from a secret and well-founded conviction, that the Bible, without note or comment, will make all honest and unprejudiced readers Unitarians? They have betrayed their want of confidence in the Bible to teach the doctrine of 'Three in One.' They would stamp *Trinitarian* on its back, as a talisman against the omnipotence of truth. They dare not send it forth on the strength of its own merits. They are afraid to trust it alone. It will propagate the soul-destroying heresy! It will unteach all that has been taught by Athanasius and Calvin. That it has already produced some of these effects, we may rest persuaded. And how should it not? The Bible is Unitarian throughout—anti-trinitarian in the beginning, anti-trinitarian in the middle, anti-trinitarian in the end. It knows as little of the doctrine as of the terms Trinity and Trinitarian, and that is nothing. But, it teaches that God is one person—one intelligent Being, the Creator and the Father of all. 'This is life eternal, to know Thee the ONLY true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' In all that was written by Moses and the Prophets, and taught by Christ and his Apostles, we can discover nothing of a Trinity—nothing of a Platonic, an Aristotelian, a Pythagorean, a Brahminical, a Runic, a Sabellian, a Swedenborgian, Trinity; nor any of the three-score and ten Trinities which have claimed in turns the belief, and imposed on the credulity of mankind. Christianity repudiates the very name of Trinity, as a heathen abomination, an insult to reason, a blasphemy against the most sublime truth of revelation. The Bible, I repeat, is essentially a Unitarian book; and if allowed to do its own work, and to go forth in its own simple majesty, without the deforming and distorting drapery in which priestcraft and bigotry would enfold it, it will Unitarianize the world. It has wrought and it is working marvellous conversions. Unitarians have no misgivings of mind as to the result. They are willing to cast their bread on the waters, assured that after many days they shall find it. They are willing that the good seed of the Word should be scattered, though



by orthodox hands, for the Lord of the harvest will cause every seed, according to an invariable law of his providence, to produce *after its kind*, and therefore the crop must be UNITARIAN. It is from ignorance of the Bible, or from coming to its perusal with minds pre-occupied by anti-biblical notions, from blind attachment to antiquated creeds and nursery catechisms, from blind veneration for State religion and its forms established by human laws, that men are Trinitarians. Let them dare to emancipate their minds from the inglorious vassalage; let them assume courage to read the Sacred Volume with their own eyes, to judge by their own understandings; and the religious world will at last become truly Christian, and worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Dr. Stratton seconded the resolution.

The Rev. George Armstrong, a clergyman recently of the Established Church of Ireland, proposed the following Resolution:—"That as all true religion must ally itself with the advancement of the general mind, it is the character of Unitarian Christianity to rejoice in the free extension of intellectual light and moral culture through society; that the sectarianism which afflicts this land may be gradually soothed by uniting in the school-room, those who are divided in the church; and that, with these convictions, we hail with satisfaction the project for national education which has recently been devised; and believe that, in thus attempting to reunite those social elements which intolerance has dis severed, the Government of the country is wielding its secular power in true co-operation with the peaceful spirit of the Gospel." In recommending it, he said, "From the earliest period at which I can charge my recollection with having thought upon the subject, I can truly say, that the scheme of education for the people of this country, which has at length been put forward under the patronage of the Government, was precisely that which had always presented itself to my judgment, however faintly it might have grown upon my hopes, as one which was most adapted to our wants, and most consistent with policy, justice, and true religion."

After exposing with great and merited severity the objections made by various parties to the plan of Education proposed by Government, showing the inconsistency of those objections in themselves and with each other, and reprobating the spirit of bigotry and intolerance by which the opposition was characterised—after showing that there were many points in which all Christians, of whatever denomination, were agreed; and that these marked out a common ground on which all might unite their efforts for the education of the people,—after quoting passages from various opponents of National Education, illustrative of their rancorous hatred of every faith but their own,—after proving that the standard of truth, or the measure of heresy, to these persons, was not the Bible, but an Act of Parliament or the Westminster Confession,—after showing, in answer to the objections against selections from the Bible, that "what we subtract, we only postpone; but what they add, they bind upon men's souls with chains too heavy to be borne, and without the solace of one glimpse of hope that they are



never to be removed or lightened,"—Mr. Armstrong said, "Sir, the public ear has been stunned with lamentations of this complexion; and all the art of language, all the resources of hate, have been exhausted upon the system which has presumed to abridge (they call it to mutilate) the sacred records, and adopt them to the peculiar necessities of a people whom superstition may indeed oppress, but whom we hope fanaticism may never rescue. And yet, Sir, this work of subtraction, this policy of adapting, of consulting for time and place and exigency, had not been unheard of before. Will it be believed, when reverend persons, as well in Dublin as in London, were lavishing anathemas on the impiety of 'selection,' that no fewer than 112 chapters, together with three entire books of the Jewish Canon, were discarded from the Scriptural services of the Church of England! Will it be believed, when gentlemen were telling with horror, of the presumption of deciding perchance by a show of hands, 'whether the Prophecies of Ezekiel were fit for perusal,' that of the eight and forty chapters which compose that prophetic book, no fewer than 37 were omitted in the Scriptural services of the Church of England! Will it be believed, when these persons were quoting, amidst a tempest of shouts and bravos, the words, 'if any one shall take away from the words of the Book of this Prophecy, God shall take away his part from the book of life;' that all this while, their precious palms were smiting the head of the Spiritual Mother that bore them, inasmuch as out of the two and twenty chapters of the book of this very Prophecy, no fewer than nineteen are altogether omitted in the Scriptural services of the Church of England! How true it is, that they who live in glass-houses should be careful of throwing stones. But such men are incapable of prudence. At every step they take, and every missile they discharge, retaliation tenfold is ready to overwhelm them."

Mr. Armstrong then admirably exposed the absurdity of the opponents of National Education heaping on its friends the epithets of Papist, Radical, and Socinian, and continued, "We come forward to patronise with all our influence, and to cherish with all our might, this scheme of Education, for the first time truly national, because it is purely impartial in its character. We come forward to avert, from the calumniated Board which is to be the agent of its salutary influence, the shafts which malevolent and factious hands have aimed at it. We hail the first measure which has been accorded, for diffusing with a liberal hand, the seeds of a vigorous, because an unsuspected and a welcome knowledge. From such a beginning, we own we expect a plentiful, though it may be a distant return. We are disposed to think that a little leaven being once introduced, the whole mass will in process of time be fermented. We are disposed to think that the point of the wedge being once firmly fixed, its whole insertion, not speedily but surely, must be effected; and the toughest materials which ignorance, indolence, superstition, or intolerance can oppose to its progress, be riven into fragments."

The Resolution was seconded by the Rev. James Armstrong, who said—"In seconding the Resolution proposed by my respected friend, permit me to express the gratification I feel at seeing him amongst us, and taking a part in our proceedings. I consider it as a very striking and distinguished testimony to the power and truth of the religious principles we profess, that a clergyman of the Established Church, whose intellectual endowments are of so high an order, and whose virtues and learning are an ornament to his sacred profession, should thus unequivocally declare his conviction, that Unitarian Christianity is the religion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What but the holy and irrepressible love of truth could have induced such a mind as his, not only to retire from a Church in which he was honoured and beloved, to resign his benefice, and to forego the brilliant prospects of preferment which he might most reasonably have had in view, from his connexions as well as his high character; but moreover, to join himself with a Society which he well knows is 'every where spoken against,' calumniated, and reviled—a society which has no emoluments or honours to bestow, and which offers no allurements but the unshackled investigation of truth, and the uncontaminated religion of the Redeemer? Proud may we be of such an accession to our cause; and thankful ought we to be to Divine Providence, that, while Robertson and Lindsey, Wakefield and Jebb, are reaping in a better world the reward of their faithful confessing of Jesus upon earth, their mantle has descended upon one so worthy to wear it—upon one so well qualified to maintain, as they did, a prominent and commanding position in that resistance to error and delusion of every kind, in that vindication of the rights of conscience, and in that uncompromising support of truth, which form the object and the bond of all Unitarian Christian associations.

"With respect to the Resolution which I have the honour to second, the subject has been so fully and so ably discussed by my reverend friend, that it is unnecessary for me to detain you with more than one or two observations. I cannot reflect, without a feeling of indescribable disgust, on the manner in which the judicious and impartial system of national education, devised by our present liberal and enlightened Government, has been assailed by that political and selfish faction, which has been the constant opponent to the peace and concord and prosperity of the people of Ireland. It is shocking to observe that Peers, and Prelates, and Presbyters, members of parliament, corporations, ministers of religion, and magistrates, have conspired, in one ferocious cry of reprobation, against a measure so well calculated to improve the minds of the populace of this country, and to bind the rising generation of all religious names, in union and love, by the ties of early associations. It is a melancholy sign of the times, that they have not scrupled to give the sanction of their countenance to the promulgation of the most shameless misrepresentations (I may add falsehoods), in describing the constitution of the Board, and detailing the regulations of the system." Having given some instances of these misrepresentations, Mr. Armstrong proceeded—"Yet, amidst this disgust-

ing farrago of fanaticism, hypocrisy, and political rancour, it is consoling to reflect that an over-ruling Providence has made these violent men the unconscious instruments of setting forth a most important, and to themselves a new principle amongst their ignorant and besotted partizans. It is most satisfactory to hear from such persons, the cheering cry, '*The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible.*' It seems as if the Lord had 'put a new song into their mouths.' I hail this cry with unspeakable delight. If it be sincerely adopted, the reign of bigotry will soon terminate. Down must come the contradictory articles, the absurd creeds, the antichristian confessions, and all the other debasing corruptions that have so long interposed their dark and baleful atmosphere between the beams of evangelical truth, and the bewildered minds of men. Gladly do we re-echo the cry they have adopted. Long and widely may it reverberate! It is the true principle on which our Association is founded; for well am I assured, that wherever the Bible alone is the foundation of religious knowledge, there it will inevitably lead to the adoption of Unitarian Christianity."

Mr. John Neilson moved the following Resolution:—"That we cordially extend to the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association, the same measures of fraternal sympathy which its members have manifested towards us, and deem ourselves favoured in the opportunity of expressing that sympathy to its enlightened and eloquent Secretary, Rev. George Harris; that we regard his efforts, and those of the institution with which he is connected, as instruments of Providence for imparting to the people of Scotland, a form of Christianity worthy of their reflecting and conscientious character; and that we anticipate a time, neither distant nor doubtful, when, by a succession of such powerful agencies, the soul of the Covenanters shall awake once more, and, with spirit softened and intrepidity refreshed by its sleep of ages, proclaim the glad tidings of a new reformation, and carry through the land the bloodless triumphs of the law of truth and love, over error, intolerance, and gloom." "It called on the meeting to express its sympathy with the Unitarian Association of Scotland. Interesting as it was to mark the progress of such a Society, wheresoever established, it must be peculiarly gratifying to the Irish Unitarians to observe its operations in a country so well fitted to be the theatre of its achievements as Scotland. There might be seen a people, famed for their love of religious study, famed for their zeal in maintaining what they believed to be religious truth; there was a horizon undisturbed by the tempests that agitated the public mind of Ireland; there the feelings of the people were undistracted by the crusading frenzy of fanatics, whose conduct had made Ireland appear little else than an arena for the exhibition of half religious, half political, but wholly frantic polemics. In Scotland the case was different. Her soil was better fitted for the seed of truth; and the Meeting was called on to express its wish, that the labours of the sowers might not be in vain. In the presence of the talented and eloquent individual to whom the Scottish Association was principally indebted for its great efficacy, to the value of whose services the present meeting had

already paid the well-earned tribute of its thanks, they were called on to express their joy, that Almighty Providence had been pleased to raise up men of high talents and honest hearts, as instruments for checking the errors and absurdities of Calvinism, and for giving to the people of Scotland a religion worthy of their conscientious and reflecting character. Scotland was a scene of peculiar interest. If not the birth-place, it was the cradle of Presbyterianism, of that religion which might indeed be for a time perverted and darkened by the folly or bigotry or worldly-mindedness of its professors, but whose very essence consisted in protesting against all creeds of man's device, and whose eternal watchword was freedom of conscience. That religion had been, in its infancy, untrammelled by articles or confessions; and its sinews had grown strong, and been braced in the air of freedom that breathed upon the northern mountains. What Presbyterian, who might possibly have Scottish blood flowing in his veins, could anticipate without delight, the day when the universal mind of Scotland should burst the shackles that bound it; when the errors of a gloomy creed should pass away; when reason and revelation should assert before the eyes of all, their indissoluble unity, and religious knowledge and religious truth should enlighten every castle and cottage in the land." The Resolution was seconded by Mr. J. S. Armstrong.

The following Resolution was proposed by Mr. H. Hutton of Kilmore, and seconded Dr. J. C. Ferguson:—"That in estimating the prospects of pure and undefiled Christianity, it is delightful to turn to the several portions of the globe where it enjoys a peaceful shelter now, and whence we may anticipate hereafter its rapid and beneficent progress; that we contemplate with satisfaction its sanctuary in the ancient churches and university of Transylvania, its prevalence around the tomb of the Genevese Reformer, and its power in that enlightened portion of the new continent, in which truth, not encountering the hostility of institutions, has no antagonist but the natural forces of error."

Mr. Carmichael proposed the following Resolution:—"That we hail with satisfaction every promise that pure religion shall revisit any portion of that Oriental world which gave it birth; that we sympathise with every effort to make British India the seat of improved institutions and a better faith; that we have long regarded with deep admiration the philanthropic and enlightened exertions of Rajah Rammohun Roy, to elevate the social and spiritual condition of that interesting land; and that, should he be enabled to visit this country before he quits the European shores, we should deem it a high privilege to hold intercourse with the illustrious stranger, whose mild but fearless expositions of Christian truth we have read with delight, whose character we have revered from a distance, and from whose career we anticipate beneficent results to his countrymen and mankind." The Rajah, said Mr. C., in rejecting the Trinity of India, did not prostrate his understanding before another *far less* ancient, *equally* untrue, and *far more* irrational, contradictory and absurd. He gave his soul to the study of our Scriptures. But



here he could find no Trinity. What did he find? 'That the Omnipotent God, who is the only proper object of religious veneration, is *one*, and undivided in person.' 'The Lord our God is *one Lord*.' That Christ, throughout the whole of his mission, taught this most sublime of truths; and that if any of his followers could have been guilty of the blasphemous presumption of ascribing deity to his person, he would have indignantly repressed and spurned at the folly—'Why callest thou me good? there is none good but *one*, that is God.'

Mr. Drennan seconded the resolution as follows:—"Of Palestine, I shall say nothing; I fear to lessen the solemn interest which all who hear me must feel for that holy ground, the scene of our Saviour's pilgrimage, his cradle, and his grave. It must be familiar, at least in imagination, to his followers; it is indeed, in some sort, the country of every Christian, whatever be his father-land. But of India, I would say a few words; and first, of the religion, if such a system can be called a religion. Mr. Carmichael has told you of the Indian Superior Trinity. Of some such doctrine we have probably had an example, without travelling so far to find it. But what would even Trinitarians say to 330 millions of inferior divinities?—a number so stupendous, that those among them who acquire names, may deem themselves peculiarly fortunate. But extremes meet; and I would fain hope, that this may be merely a different mode of expressing that truth, which was so eloquently illustrated yesterday, by our Rev. friend, Mr. Harris, that 'God is all in all.'

"My friend who moved this Resolution, has well remarked, that the Indian Trinitarians have also an incarnation of the Supreme Being; but in this respect they are more than a match for the Island of Saints—they have increased the number, (I do not pretend to say, that the absurdity could be increased,) and instead of one, have insisted on ten incarnations. Yet these doctrines might be comparatively harmless, if confined to the Brahmins, and unaccompanied by a long train of cruel superstitions. But what are we to think of a religion, which robs the child of a mother's care, and consigns the living wife to the burning pile, beside the corpse of her husband? And what are we to think of the men who inveighed against Lord William Bentinck for abolishing this infernal custom; for breaking down, forsooth, the ancient institutions of the country, and introducing such a dangerous innovation! What religion must that be which changes the very nature of the gentle and timid Hindoo—which can make a mother throw her child to the shark of the Ganges, or the Father dash it and himself before the wheels of the idol of Juggernaut—which imposes an endless round of unmeaning ceremonies, of the most horrible and revolting penances, of practices whose very repetition would fatigue and disgust my hearers? It is a refreshment to the spirit, to turn from these details to the simple, yet sublime precepts of love to God, and love to man. When I see the contrast, I forget that I am a Unitarian, and I care little under what form Christianity may be cultivated in the East, only let there be Christianity.



"I regret, Sir, for the sake of Britain, that I cannot speak of the degradation of India, without arraigning the East India Company. The subjects are inseparable, they cannot be torn asunder—we cannot govern others without bearing a heavy responsibility ourselves; there cannot be a slave without a tyrant, or a contented servant with an unjust master. My accusation rests on the reports of secretaries, judges, and governors of India: and I arraign the Company for having engaged in the most sanguinary wars, for the most unjustifiable purposes; for having not only neglected, but much abused the awful trust committed to them—dominion over millions of their fellow-creatures.

"I turn with pleasure from the London merchants, who have not even procured gold, accursed as it would have been, obtained by such means—for we should not forget that wars, those splendid crimes, have loaded them with debt—to the Indian prince, who has found in the Gospel a golden mine, pure, indestructible, inexhaustible,—to Rammohun Roy, a chief among his people, a man imbued with all the learning of the East; and who will take back to India, I trust, a knowledge derived from experience of the improved institutions of the West, that may yet have a mighty effect on the destinies of the Oriental world. I am not prepared, Sir, I confess, with a list of dusky proselytes. I fear that hitherto, they have been 'few and far between.' But with such a one to commence with, why should we despair. We have before us to-day, the example of a man, whose zeal and sincerity have been best proved by his unwearied exertions for the success of our cause in Scotland; and when we see what he has done, may we not turn in hope to the Indian Rajah? We may yet behold a star again rising in the East, and with mild radiance pointing out the birth-place of our blessed Saviour, and illuminating the sacred pages of his Gospel."

In the afternoon, the members and friends of the Society, dined together, at the Commercial Mart Hotel, Upper Sackville-street; — Currie, Esq. in the chair. The Revds. Harris, Hutton, Drummond, Armstrong, and Martineau; and Messrs. Porter, Neilson, Hone, and the Chairman, addressed the Meeting. A well merited tribute of thanks was given to Mr. Martineau for his indefatigable labours in the formation and establishment of the Society; and sincere regrets were expressed that Dublin—Ireland was to lose the aid of his powerful advocacy of Christian truth and righteousness.

---

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

ON Thursday, May the 10th, the above-named Society, held its Annual Meeting in the Meeting-house of the Second Presbyterian Congregation, in Belfast.

The Rev. HENRY MONTGOMERY delivered an able and eloquent discourse on Hosea iv. 6. "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*"

After divine service, JOHN H. HOUSTON, Esq. of Orangefield, was called to the chair, on the motion of the Rev. FLETCHER BLAKELY; and the Report of the Committee was read by the Rev. J. SCOTT PORTER. The Report stated that only £23 10s. had been collected during the past year, for the purposes of the Society; and accounted for the smallness of this sum by referring to the fact, that the existence and objects of the Society had not attained that publicity which was desirable. It is hoped that this defect has already been remedied in some degree; and that a more extensive range of useful operations will be the result. The Committee stated that they had received by donation or purchase 1697 Tracts, of which 662 had been put into circulation. These were described as being of two kinds; doctrinal and practical; and both were recommended as being well calculated to promote the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge. After acknowledging donations by other Societies, and congratulating the Unitarian public on the formation of a new Congregation in Ballymoney, founded on those principles of Christian liberty which it is one of the objects of the Society to uphold; the Report concluded by recommending an increased zeal and application to the purposes for the promotion of which the Society was formed.

The Report having been read, it was moved by WILLIAM TENNENT, Esq. seconded by WILLIAM BOYD, Esq. and resolved unanimously,

“That the Report which has just been read be received, and entered on the Minutes of the Society’s proceedings.”

It was then moved by the Rev. Dr. BRUCE, seconded by ROBERT CALLWELL, Esq. and resolved unanimously,

“That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Rev. HENRY MONTGOMERY, for his able and impressive Discourse delivered this morning.”

Rev. W. Bruce moved, Dr. Burden seconded, “That the thanks of this Society are due to the Irish Unitarian Christian Association, for its aid; and likewise to the British and Foreign Unitarian Christian Association, and to the Western Unitarian Association, for the donations which they have respectively forwarded, and for the generous interest which they, in common with their brethren, the Unitarians of Great Britain, have evinced, on behalf of the improvement and happiness of Ireland; and that we beg them to accept the assurance of our heartfelt wishes for their prosperity, and joy for their great and increasing success.”

Moved by Rev. George Harris, and seconded by Robert Callwell, Esq.—“That principles are of value, only in proportion as they tend to the advancement of the knowledge, freedom, and happiness of mankind; and that we deem Christian Unitarianism to be worthy of all acceptance, not only because it is identical with the Gospel of Christ, but on account of its consonance with the various dispensations of the Almighty, in their adaptation to the moral education, reformation, and felicity of the world.”

Rev. H. Montgomery moved, Andrew Marshall, Esq. seconded,

"That we feel a deep interest in the progress of Unitarian Christianity on the Continent of Europe; and in America, where, defended by the splendid genius of Channing and his illustrious coadjutors unfettered by the opposition of a dominant church, and supported by the mighty power of its own intrinsic beauty and truth, its success has been rapid and triumphant."

Rev. F. Blakely moved, and was seconded by William Emerson, Esq. "That we entertain a daily increasing conviction of the value and importance of the objects of the Unitarian Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge; namely, to maintain the sufficiency of Scripture as a perfect rule of faith and practice—to vindicate the right of private judgment and free inquiry on religious subjects—and to promote a knowledge of the genuine doctrines of Christianity, founded on the great truth that there is but One God the Father."

Rev. John Porter moved, and Surgeon Coffey seconded, "That while we are sensible of the many impediments which yet oppose the general recognition of the great principles, for the promotion of which we are associated, we cannot but acknowledge with thankfulness to Divine Providence, that some which formerly existed have been removed; and that the signs of the times encourage us to look forward to the future with hope."

Moved by Rev. N. Alexander of Crumlin, and seconded by Rev. J. S. Porter, "That we earnestly request all friends to this Society and to the objects which it embraces, to exert themselves with zeal in order to promote its efficiency, and extend its usefulness; and that with this view, we would recommend it to ministers and congregations, to procure sermons to be preached, and collections made, annually, in aid of the Society's funds."

Moved by Rev. J. S. Porter, seconded by Rev. W. Bruce, "That it be recommended to our Committee, to consider and to adopt what may appear to them the most promising means of promoting the growth of pure Christianity, among the poor and labouring class of this town and neighbourhood."

The Committee for the ensuing year was then appointed, and thanks voted to the Chairman. At six o'clock, a very large Congregation assembled in the same Meeting-House, when Mr. Harris preached, and closed the services of the day by prayer.

Several of the gentlemen who proposed these Resolutions, addressed the meeting: but as it is quite impossible for us to insert the whole of the speeches delivered on the occasion, and as a mere sketch would afford our readers but little satisfaction, we have judged it best to lay before them the substance of the remarks made by Messrs. Harris, Montgomery, and Blakely, in proposing their respective Resolutions.

Mr. Harris spoke nearly to the following effect:—

When I look around me upon this numerous and respectable assembly, I feel impelled to thank God, and take courage. I regard this assembly as an indication of the progress of the times—of a growing spirit of enquiry and of benevolence; as a pledge

and prelude of brighter days ; as a testimony to the true character of the religion of the Saviour, which tells of privilege to the many, emancipates from the thralldom of superstition, and ushers humanity into the presence of God. I enter fully into the sentiment of the resolution which has been put into my hands, that Unitarianism is in complete accordance with the series of the divine dispensations. These have been not only dispensations of abstract wisdom, faithfulness, and mercy, but have been beautifully adapted to the several stages of human progress to perfection. In the infancy of humanity, the mode of God's government was analogous to the exercise of parental authority—a special guardianship constantly exerted, a literal obedience constantly exacted. He was as the patriarch of patriarchs, the Almighty God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As man advanced to the youth of intellect, temptations multiplied ; tyranny came to crush, and found in superstition a ready ally. It seemed good to heaven to secure one sacred enclosure, to set apart one select nation, as the depository of wisdom : and prone as uncultivated man is to ceremony and show, He who seeth the heart decreed, that the spirit of holy truth should be enshrined in ritual observances. As man advanced further, the vision of nobler progress, the buddings of more productive reason, the reign of a higher benevolence, were shadowed forth by the prophets. At length the manhood of the race arrived, and the messenger of grace appeared. Broken down was the wall of partition, and the temple-gates thrown open ; and the banner was borne before the conqueror, inscribed with the announcement of 'peace on earth and good will to men ;' peace, not merely to one tribe, but to all generations ; good will, not merely to Scribes and Pharisees, not to any privileged few, but to man as man, as part of that great family, of which the Saviour is the elder brother, and God the impartial Parent. To us the ceremonies of Judaism are not adapted ; at the time of their appointment they were essential. Man as a race resembles man as an individual : that which would be his sustenance at one time would be his death at another. It is a proof of God's wisdom, that while his revelations have been various, they have been in unbroken harmony ; and their diversity and their harmony are both illustrative of the progress of man towards perfection. It is in this view of the progressiveness of its tendency, that I especially advocate Unitarian Christianity : its principles are my best treasures, not merely because they are reason's dictate, but because, being identified with the gospel, they possess its spirit of enlarging benevolence. When Christianity sprung forth fresh from the Author and finisher of our faith, then was the period of its moral power ; its spirit of philanthropy evinced in its banding in holy brotherhood the Jew, the Samaritan, the Gentile : its spirit of devotion testified in the sufferings of confessors, and the blood of martyrdom. When it became corrupted, when it was contaminated by unholy alliance with courts and thrones, when its pure simplicity of worship was forgotten—then tyranny and licentiousness rioted ; then pure Christianity was exiled to the mountains : and when from these fortresses it issued



once more, the sounds of renovated liberty were uttered first by the believers in God's unrivalled majesty and unqualified benevolence. And as Unitarianism has connected itself with the periods of the gospel's greatest moral power, so has it been received by the greatest minds of our race as the truth of God. Those who have read aright the annals of their race know this. Who was he that unravelled the mysteries of the human soul, and laid his finger of discovery upon the subtleties of thought, and, enamoured of the truth, was the friend of enquiry, and held forth to the wandering intellect the lamp of knowledge? John Locke, the Christian Unitarian, whose name is dear, wherever philosophy and liberty are held sacred. And who was he, before whose gaze the veil which had enwrapped creations glories withdrew, who wandered in thought through regions of the universe, where he grew familiar with the blaze of suns, and crossed the planetary tracks? Newton, the Christian Unitarian, who, though standing among men as the interpreter of the creator, deemed his faith dearer and sublimer than his philosophy! And who was he who communed with the heavenly muse on "Sion's height, and by Siloa's brook that flow'd fast by the oracle of God;" and thence "invok'd her aid to his adventurous song;" he who raised the soul to heaven by his lofty verse, and vindicated its liberty on earth by his immortal prose? John Milton, the Christian Unitarian, whose patriotism, inspiration, and theology, dwelt in beautiful harmony within his soul. You know that I might lengthen out this list. Names like these, enshrined in the veneration of mankind, prove that knowledge is the herald of Unitarianism; and vice versa—where Unitarianism dwells, knowledge and liberty will not be far. The call which we make to our fellowmen is—"think; think freely; if you think with us, well; but at all events, think; know yourselves, know your religion, know your Saviour, know your God, know your rights, and maintain them; and then you adorn, you dignify your nature. That is not freedom of inquiry which admits of any boundaries but those of the human intellect; that is not free enquiry, which Athanasius or Calvin menaces with fire eternal. I look on him as a vassal, who is terrified by man's frown, or seduced by his smile, from taking the Bible in his hand, and extracting from its sacred page an uninfluenced, an individual faith. I glory in the name of Protestant—a name associated with the noblest struggles for spiritual liberty; but if there be abroad in the land a spirit striving to deter the enquirer from his pursuit, if it warn the people against reading the books of those who are contemptuously pronounced unsound in the faith; if it calls into exercise family influence, and enlist family affection in behalf of intolerance; if it convert social intercourse into a sectarian squabble, and if I am asked to call this Protestantism, I will be no party to the unballowed misnomer. The rack and the fire are not there indeed; but is there not a prostration of mind at variance with genuine Protestantism? It matters little whether the Bible be put into the hands of the people, or be shut up, if the people are after all to judge of it by proxy.



If I am to bow down to authority, give me not the charter of my liberties to mock me. There is no medium between "the Bible and the whole Bible," and a degrading vassalage to authority: and Unitarianism, withholding that Bible from none, and prescribing no creed to fetter its interpretation, secures the possession of that liberty and knowledge which are the destined inheritance of every creature of the living God. Unitarianism, by the views it enfolds of God as a kind parent, and man as his beloved child, make the promotion of knowledge and happiness the duty of all its believers. And in the performance of this duty they will imitate that Being whose highest glory it is, that He is the fountain of universal good. They will unmask all those false and specious forms of good, which tyranny has dressed up for the delusion of the nations. There is that scourge of humanity, that path to renown stained with blood and haunted by images of crime and death, that Moloch war. When religion was pure and fresh, the arms of the warrior were laid at the foot of the cross; but when potentates took Christianity under their royal patronage, then the banner was raised again. And the restoration of pure religion would restore concord. The prevalence of Unitarianism would be the prevalence of universal peace; men would learn the difference between the false glory, the mushroom greatness, which, in the service of selfishness desolates the earth, and that true greatness, whose interpretation is usefulness; that pure glory, whose essence is a love of duty toiling for the general good; the glory, not of the soldier, but of the philanthropist; the glory of principle, of probity, of truth, of justice, of benevolence; the glory, not of governing men as machines, but of instructing them to educate and govern themselves. There is that insult to humanity, slavery, and be it black or white, our sympathy is with the wronged and outraged. And would men but regard God as their Father these things could exist no longer. But while God is thought of as a tyrant, and earth as an accursed prison-house, and man as an outcast, slavery has a plea of sympathy with faith. The soul is branded to men's hands already, to enthrall the body is but an insignificant improvement on God's own system. A West Indian colony realizes the picture which Calvinism gives of God's creation. It is to the progress of pure religion that we look for the abolition of slavery. Too long has the black looked around him, and asked "am I not a friend and a brother"—too long has he looked to heaven and cried "hast thou but one blessing, my Father?" Friends of freedom! reflect that the rights for which you contend are the rights of mankind; and that he who would enchain man, raises his arm against heaven. I call on all who hear me, not to cease from their exertions till the last slave ship shall have visited Africa: till the Ethiopian, from Egypt to the Cape shall stretch forth his hands to the true God.

The Criminal Code of our country, is constructed on merciless principles, at variance with the proper object of punishment. It would seem to regard the gallows as the best preventive of crime, and the hangman as the teacher of social morality. And as long as men

continue to believe that God burns his creatures in Hell-fire for ever, with no other object than the infliction of agony, they may well conclude that revenge may be the object of law, rather than reformation. In cases of heretical faith, bigots have long thought, that to kill was as short a method as to convert, and somewhat easier too; in cases of guilty conduct the law thinks so still. The inhuman principle is not a whit more reasonable in the one case than in the other: it is at variance with the decisions of sound philosophy, and with the merciful spirit of Christianity. And Unitarianism, in the views which it takes of the Divine Character, of man as a moral being, and of earth as a preparation for heaven, secures the advancement of a more humane and remedial system towards the wretched victims of guilt. The greatest happiness of the greatest number, is our object. While the inhabitants of these islands are crying out against a monopoly of trade, and a monopoly of power, how strange is it, that the monopoly of heaven should be regarded as a bright and saving article of faith! A monopoly which shrouds the earth in gloom, and makes heaven a conventicle,—how opposed is it to that religion, which flings open the everlasting doors, and inscribes on the portals, that “God is no respecter of persons, but, in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, shall be accepted of him.” It is because I perceive the sympathy between existing systems of faith, and existing practices of injustice, that I believe those systems to be not only erroneous and unscriptural, but alien to the spirit of humanity, and hostile to the prevalence of genuine liberty. Glad am I to know that numbers who entertain the common Theology, feel, and act inconsistently with their faith; that the human heart gains a victory over the creeds that are interwoven with their memory, and receive the assent of the judgment. Would we bring glory to God and blessings to our fellow-men? It must be by the open profession of those principles which we believe to be gospel truths, that we can hope to accomplish these dearest objects of our hearts. God has declared, that “he will have all men to be saved,” and the Saviour has assured us, that “the truth shall make his disciples free,”—free, doubtless, from sin, prejudice, and imperfection. The triumph of truth and justice, then, is secure. Let us only do our parts, and then leave the issue in the hands of Omnipotent love. To stimulate you to this duty, is the object of the Society which calls us together. May its accomplishment form the happiness of your lives, and through eternal ages prove the glory—the honour of your immortality.

The Rev. Henry Montgomery in moving the fourth resolution, excused himself from addressing the meeting at any length after the fatigue of preaching; and because he was labouring under a severe cold. He said that the resolution entrusted to him carried its own recommendation with it. We believe our principles to be founded in the will of God, calculated to promote the best interests of men on earth, and to bring them to happiness in eternity.

We rejoice that the same spirit which is now diffusing itself over our own land, is also prevailing over the continent of Europe—that being free from the great temptations of ecclesiastical power and ecclesiastical endowments, Germany has emancipated itself from the thralldom of Calvinistic Trinitarianism. On this account the continental Unitarians are called Infidels, and stigmatized by other opprobrious epithets; but we need not wonder at this, when we find ourselves exposed to similar abuse, although we feel that all our everlasting hopes are founded upon the Gospel of Christ. Geneva that was the cradle of Calvinism has become its grave; and all exertions at resuscitation have signally failed. The resolution refers to America. In America we feel a deep and lively interest. Unitarianism there prevails to a great extent; and this is what we might expect. Wherever the power of the world has interfered, the truth of Christianity has been corrupted.—when liberty prevails then our cause succeeds. Nothing is so favourable to liberty as the prevalence of truth, and nothing so favourable to truth as the prevalence of liberty.

The resolution speaks of *Channing*. He is a man of splendid genius, of vast intellectual powers, but of something better—of a warm and genial charity—of a loftiness of devotion, such as he (Mr. M.) felt it most desirable to possess, though at the same time he regretted his own deficiency! Channing came near to that beloved disciple who was best fitted for repose on the bosom of the Saviour.

The Resolution mentions his coadjutors, and he has coadjutors of great worth, such as Henry Ware, jun. the Professor of Theology, in the University of Cambridge—his Christian simplicity and kindness of heart, were only equalled by his admirable talents. Mr. M. looked forward with hope to the future. No great purpose of the divine government will ultimately fail. Men may raise clouds of dust and endeavour to blind the eyes of others, but the sun of righteousness will in time disperse them, and burst forth in all its splendour to illuminate the world.

The Rev. Fletcher Blakely in proposing the 5th Resolution, said,—The sufficiency of Scripture as a *perfect rule* of FAITH and PRACTICE, is the grand pillar on which the Reformation is built, and the one upon which every true Protestant takes his stand, when assailed by the weapons of human authority. Our ancient reformers avowed, that the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants. Our modern reformers tell us, that they have chosen for their motto, the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible. These declarations sound very well in *words*, but the great misfortune is, that in *works* the great majority of the Protestants deny them and depart from their own avowed principles. When debating with Roman Catholics, they cry—the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible; but when labouring to put down Unitarianism, they refer for proofs in favour of their opinions, to human Creeds and Confessions—to human Articles and Overtures. Their conduct is so inconsistent that no ingenuity, however great, can reconcile or justify their proceedings.

These nominal reformers have separated themselves from the Church of Rome, avowing that belief in the sufficiency of sacred Scripture, and the right of private judgment in the interpretation of it, is a complete bond of union among all genuine Protestants. So long and so far as we continue to think as they do, this is all very well, but farther it is dangerous to go. We must not go beyond this, nor stop short of it, though in the exercise of the very same privilege which they themselves claim in dissenting from the traditionary faith. And thus they have relapsed into the same exclusive system as that from which their forefathers emancipated themselves, and treat as apostates all who step without the pale of their communion, and dictate to all who continue within it.

Unitarians are the only consistent body of Protestants, who adhere to the sufficiency of the sacred Scriptures, as a perfect rule of faith and practice, and the right of private judgment in the interpretation of them. Whatever is clearly stated in the Scriptures, they receive as a Scripture doctrine, and whatever is not stated in the Scriptures, they cannot call a doctrine of Christianity. Though we are proud in numbering among the champions of Unitarian Christianity, such men as Milton and Newton, Locke and Lardner, Howard and Emlyn, yet we are not Unitarians because they were, and we disown being the disciples of Arius and Socinus. We have one creed—the Bible; and one Master—Jesus Christ. We can express all the peculiarities of our faith, in the very words of Jesus Christ or his Apostles. We believe that “there is but one God, the Father,” because such is the plain and frequent teaching of the Old and New Testament. We do not believe in the doctrine of God the Son, nor of God the Holy Ghost, nor of three persons being in the Godhead, because none of them is stated in the Holy Scriptures, which are the only authority to which we bow in matters of faith. When we pray, we say “Our Father who art in heaven,” and we believe that we are then addressing one God in one person, who is both willing and able to supply all our wants, and to answer all our requests; and we cannot turn away from him to any other being, however amiable and excellent, without giving countenance to the worship of more Gods than one. For we cannot distinguish between three infinite persons, and three infinite beings; nor between three infinite beings and three Gods. And I put it to every candid inquirer to try the distinction in his own mind, and to be guided by the result.

We lament to think, that the prejudices of Jews and Gentiles, of Pagans and Mahometans against primitive Christianity, are frequently strengthened by the revolting and contradictory lights in which it is exhibited by many churches, which call themselves by its name. But we rejoice to know that Unitarian Christianity is breaking down the barriers of superstition and skepticism, and constraining men of every colour and of every creed, to renounce their Gods many, and their Lords many, and to embrace the simple doctrines of one God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ. Such circumstances produce increasing conviction of the value of

Unitarian views, and the more especially, when they are formed, in opposition to early prejudices, to worldly interest, and sometimes at the loss of property.

Though we do not think that Calvinists or Catholics, (between whom there is little difference,) that Jews or Pagans, or that Mahometans or Heathens, are necessarily under the wrath and curse of God, because they hold certain erroneous opinions, still we believe, that they are in different conditions of darkness and confusion of mind, from which it is God's purpose to redeem the human race. We see in many of them human nature degraded, and we are persuaded, that the reception of Unitarian Christianity would change their characters, enlarge their capacities for happiness, and better prepare them for the enjoyment of eternal life:—Not for *meriting* eternal life, for this no Unitarian believes; no, he ascribes eternal life to the free grace of God, but he maintains that holiness is necessary to its enjoyment.

We believe in the great power and worth of Unitarian Christianity above every other view, in elevating the human character, and therefore we entertain a daily increasing conviction of the value and importance of this society, for the promotion of Christian knowledge and human virtue. We are firmly persuaded that moral actions are influenced by speculative opinions, and do humbly maintain that the example, the sufferings, the death, and the resurrection of our great Lord and Master, must sway the conduct and hopes of every Unitarian Christian more powerfully than they can a Trinitarian, who cannot suppose himself bound to practice the virtues of a *person* whom he denominates the supreme God, and who cannot, of course, be tempted, nor praised for resisting temptation. Every Unitarian believes that Jesus Christ was made perfect by sufferings; but no Unitarian can believe that God ever suffered, or could by any trial or time be made more perfect in any way.

The time is come, Mr. Chairman, for this society to exert itself in defending the Gospel from the admixture of human inventions, and to present it to the poor of this fertile but unhappy country, in all its native loveliness and mercy. If it be a cunningly devised fable, let us give it up, and submit to the heavier yoke of sin and superstition; but if it is from heaven, (and Unitarians have been most successful in proving that it is,) let us show our conviction of its truth and power, by our lives and actions, and by endeavouring to win over all ranks and ages to the belief, that there is but one God, the Father; that Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, and that we, consequently, cannot serve other masters, or submit to any other faith or doctrine than what we find stated in his Gospel.

---



THE  
Bible Christian.

No. VI.

JULY, 1832.

VOL. III.

VINDICATION OF THE UNITY OF GOD.

MR. EDITOR,—The intelligent reader, who has attentively perused Mr. Bagot's treatise in defence of the Athanasian Trinity, cannot but perceive that, on the principle which I have hitherto pursued, of confronting his several statements with one another, I might extend my strictures to an indefinite length. But possibly it may be thought unnecessary to cause him to carry the work of self-immolation any farther; and that enough has already been done to show that his treatise, notwithstanding the composure and calm complacency with which it has been put forth, presents, throughout, the same mass of incoherence and confusion, and frequent self-contradiction, which has characterised every work in defence of the same doctrine, from the days of Athanasius down to the present hour.

However, before closing this part of the task which I have undertaken, I cannot forbear offering an observation or two on the manner in which he has disposed of a very important portion of the question—the practice of addressing prayer to Christ as the Supreme God,—a practice which Mr. Bagot is especially bound to vindicate as a Minister of the Established Church. Upon this subject he has some very curious, but as usual, very incoherent remarks. He observes, (p. 113,) we maintain that “to offer up prayers *directly to him*, can only be justified by a belief in his Deity.” This, I think, will be admitted on all hands. And in the next page he as truly asserts that “Christ could not have directed his disciples to pray to him in any other capacity than as God.”—But here I think it will occur to any reader of the New Testament to ask—where has Christ given his disciples any such direction? Or, has he any where directed them to offer up their prayers to any but the Father? Every one must be sensible that he has nowhere done so; and Mr. Bagot himself is so well aware of this, as to allege in the very next para-

graph, that Christ could not, “consistently with his having humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation, assert those very dignities which he had laid aside, by exhibiting himself as the object of prayer, during his humiliation in the flesh.” Here let the intelligent Christian reflect upon the marvellous statement, that the eternal and unchangeable God laid aside his dignity and glory,—became something else,—something less than he had been,—something different from God,—that is, in fact, that he *ceased to be God!* And having so ceased to be God, he “could not consistently” claim the homage due to God!

But what will the reader think of it, when he is told, that this very “humiliation in the flesh,” which Mr. Bagot here supposes to have been our Lord’s reason for withholding the avowal of his Deity, he afterwards, in page 162, produces as the chief motive which induced the inspired writers, as he alleges, so frequently to assert his Deity? The substance of his observation there, is, that the Son’s manifestation in the flesh, and his human nature, forming “an obstacle to the belief of his Deity,”—“the Sacred Writers often appear to institute a digression from the subject they are treating on, in order to assert the Deity of the Son.” Now, according to this statement,—or rather these statements,—our Lord was anxious, because of his human nature, to conceal the fact of his Deity; whereas, because of the very same nature, the Sacred Writers were as anxious to disclose it. How, or where, does Mr. Bagot make this discovery? It is altogether beyond my reach: and I confess, I am thankful for it, that I have not been able to discover any such contrariety of views and objects between our Lord Jesus Christ, and his inspired Apostles: and I must say, that I should fear exceedingly to hazard a reply to that very singular demand which Mr. Bagot makes of me upon this subject, in his 114th page, “We ask Mr. Mitchel to prove, that Christ’s openly and plainly asserting himself to be the proper object of direct worship, *was not one* of those “many things which he had to say unto his disciples, and which they could not yet bear!” I wonder how Mr. Bagot would set about his task, if he were asked to *prove* that this *was* one of those “many things.” But the very demand thus made of me is, to say the least of it, a tacit acknowledgement,

that though our Lord's assertion of his Supreme Deity, *might by possibility* have been amongst his unrecorded instructions, it is certainly not to be found among those upon record.

This singularly modest demand, is about as reasonable as one which he has elsewhere made of me, namely, "to produce an instance of the Son having prayed to the Father before his manifestation in the flesh." To be called upon to produce Scripture authority, where Scripture is silent, must be felt to be a somewhat unreasonable task: but from what we actually find recorded in Scripture, we can safely assert, that, during his sojourn upon earth, none ever more habitually or devoutly worshipped the Father than did the Son. He appears never to have performed a miracle without prayer to God. ("Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; and I know that thou hearest me always." John xi. 41.) When he brake bread, and fed the hungry, "he looked up to heaven" for a blessing upon it. (Mark, vi. 41.) On all the great and trying occasions of his life, and at the approach of death, we cannot but see how humbly and earnestly he worshipped God in prayer. And though, after his ascension to the right hand of God, he be represented in the character of the "Lamb that was slain," as associated in the homage of Heaven, with "Him who sitteth upon the throne;" yet do we find him also represented, in Rev. xv. 2, as even there joining with the heavenly hosts in celebrating the praises of the Lord God Almighty, and thus offering his homage in unison with others, to the great God and Father of all:—"And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, *and the song of the Lamb*, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name! for *thou only art holy*."—And this I take to be a fair reply to that question so "confidently proposed" by Mr. Bagot in his 111th page,—“How do you account for the *fact*, that in every revelation that is given to us in scripture of the occupations and proceedings of the inhabitants of the invisible world, whilst all the created inmates of heaven are represented as doing homage before the throne of the everlasting Elohim, the Son and the Holy Spirit are never once mentioned as joining in that

worship, or doing homage to any superior being?" Mr. Bagot must have overlooked or forgotten that page of the book of Revelation which I have just quoted. The "Song of the *Lamb*," employed in hymning the praises of the "*Lord God Almighty*," (unless we are to suppose him singing *his own praise*,) leaves no such *fact* as Mr. Bagot speaks of, to be accounted for. The *fact* stands prominently out on the other side, and remains to be accounted for by any Trinitarian who is able to do it. It may help to farther abate the "confidence" with which Mr. Bagot proposes the above query, if he will please to recollect that our exalted Mediator, the Son of God, since his ascension to glory is plainly represented in Scripture, as our "Advocate with the Father;" our "Intercessor at the right hand of God." And I will just ask Mr. Bagot, in return,—does he not think that our Lord's intercession with God on behalf of his disciples, must be regarded as strictly of the nature of worship, and "doing homage before the throne of the Everlasting?" When Abraham interceded with the Lord on behalf of the "cities of the plain," he therein worshipped the living God. When Mr. Bagot intercedes with the Most High for the sick, or the sinner, he therein worships the living God. And when our great Advocate intercedes with the Father on behalf of Christians, he also must undoubtedly be regarded as doing the same. All alike worship God: all alike acknowledge a sense of dependance upon the Father of mercies: all alike "do homage to a Superior Being." But if Mr. Bagot will not allow that the Son worships the Father, how will he be able to maintain or explain the important and consoling fact of his intercession with God? On the Unitarian principle this is easily done: but it must be plain to every understanding that the Trinitarian hypothesis completely overturns the great Gospel doctrines of Mediation and Intercession; for how could any being mediate or intercede with himself? Or, if it be alleged, that it is one of three equal Persons interceding with another, then comes the inquiry,—Who is it that intercedes with the other two? Or if it be farther alleged that *they* do not require to be interceded with,—then where is this equality?

But I must quit Mr. Bagot's vindication of addressing prayer to Christ as the Supreme God, without noticing

a very extraordinary Greek criticism which he has produced, on the rendering of the verb ἐρωτᾷ. I had observed in one of my published discourses that, according to John's Gospel, 16—23, our blessed Lord, in speaking even of the period of his highest exaltation, said to his disciples, "In that day, *ye shall ask me nothing*. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, *in my name*, he will give it you." Mr. Bagot has the following criticism on the original of these words, in his 116th page,—“you may perceive that the word ‘ask’ occurs *twice* in the verse. In the latter clause, it alludes to the offering up of prayer to the Father, through Christ, as the Mediator, and is used as the translation of the Greek word, αἰτήσῃτε; which signifies to “*pray*.” But, in the former clause, from which Mr. Mitchel’s argument is derived, it is the translation of a *different* word, ἐρωτήσῃτε, which signifies to “*to ask questions*.” Now, it will be obvious to the reader, that the whole force of Mr. Bagot’s argument, derived from this criticism, depends upon the assumption, that the verb ἐρωτᾷ, signifies *not to ask in prayer, but merely “to ask questions.”* Let us consult the proper authority. Schleusner, one of the most learned and accurate Biblical critics, does not limit the word ἐρωτᾷ, to the meaning of “*asking questions*,” but distinctly extends it to the farther interpretation of “*to pray*,” “*to intreat*,” “*to intercede*,” “*to approach God in prayer*,” an interpretation which at once upsets the very ground of the above criticism. Mr. Bagot should have looked into his Lexicon, before he ventured to rest an argument upon such ground. And he should have carefully looked into his Greek Testament, where he would have found, that the verb ἐρωτᾷ, though often employed in the sense to which he seems willing *to limit it*, is perhaps more frequently employed there in the sense to which Schleusner *extends it*, and according to which our translators have rendered it, in John, 16—23. I think it a sound principle of criticism, that any writer is to be regarded good authority as to the sense in which he employs his own terms. Now, the Evangelist John, whose language in this case is under consideration, evidently appears to have used the verbs, αἰτέω, and ἐρωτᾷ, as convertible or synonymous terms, in the passage before us; and I think he was correctly so understood by our translators: for in the 26th verse of the same



chapter, he employs, or rather represents Christ as employing—not the verb αἰτέω, but ἐρωτῶ, in promising to *intercede* for them,—ἐγὼ ἐρωτήσω τὸν πατέρα,—correctly rendered in our translation, “*I will pray the Father for you.*” But, according to Mr. Bagot, this gracious and consoling promise of our Lord, meant only—that he would “*ask questions*” for them !

Again, in the very next chapter of the same Gospel of St. John, which is one continued intercessory prayer of our blessed Mediator, and which, for this very reason Mr. Bagot should have examined, in reference to the question at issue ; the same verb, ἐρωτῶ, occurs in several places, and various forms, and has been uniformly rendered by our translators, by the English verb “*to pray*,” as it must be obvious to every reader, the sense of the several passages indispensably required. Thus, it is the verb, ἐρωτῶ, which is twice employed by our Lord, in John, xvii. 9, translated “*I pray for them: I pray not for the world.*” In the 15th verse, the same Greek verb is translated “*I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world.*” And in the 20th verse, “*Neither pray I for these alone,*” &c. Now, if Mr. Bagot be right in his rendering of the verb ἐρωτῶ, our Lord should have been represented in these several places, not at all in the attitude of *intercession* or of *prayer*, as he has been, but in that of merely “*asking questions.*” Again, in the 1st epistle of the same sacred writer, 1st John, v. 16, will be found an additional proof of his having employed the verbs αἰτέω, and ἐρωτῶ, and as convertible terms equally applicable to the act of “*prayer* ;” and that our Translators entertained the same sentiment :—“*If any man see his brother sin, a sin which is unto death, he shall ask, (αἰτήσῃ,) and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death ; I do not say that he shall pray (ἐρωτήσῃ) for it.*” These observations will, I hope, set Mr. Bagot right as to the translation of John, xvi. 23 ; and should certainly teach him to set about the business of Greek criticism with a little more caution and modesty in future.

After this, the reader may look with surprise at the expression of restrained indignation with which he commences his reply to my observations on John, xvi. 23. “*It is extremely difficult to refrain from language inconsistent with that Christian temper and candour with*

which every religious controversy should be conducted, when we find such an argument, as this will appear to be, confidently and boldly advanced." I did, with, I hope, no "bold" or unbecoming "confidence," appeal to the words and authority in that passage; and whether that confidence should be shaken or abated, let the candid reader now judge.

He observes farther,—“As far as Mr. Mitchel is concerned, he is screened from the obloquy which is connected with the person who *first* proposed it, as I am confident he has advanced it only in consequence of too implicitly relying upon the correctness of those who have preceded him in the advocacy of the system which he maintains.” I am quite ignorant of the person to whom Mr. Bagot here alludes, as having *first* proposed it: I do not claim to be that person, for as the passage in question has formed a part of John’s Gospel for nearly 1800 years, it must have been long since and often observed upon. But, I believe, on the authority of the Evangelist, that the person who *first proposed it* was our Divine master himself; and I do not desire to be screened from any share of obloquy which may be thrown upon me, “in consequence of too implicitly relying upon *his* correctness.” And then Mr. Bagot adds—“But I have no hesitation to say what I shall clearly substantiate, that the person who first proposed this objection was either grossly ignorant of the Greek language, or else wilfully intended to take advantage of an apparent ambiguity in the translation, whilst he knew that the original gave him no support.” The Greek scholar will easily and clearly ascertain, by the above observations on Mr. Bagot’s criticism, *who it is* that has earned for himself the certain character, either of ignorance or wilful perversion, of the original. Mr. Bagot has the reputation of being a good Greek scholar: I have no reason to suspect him of “ignorance” of the language, and he may not be willing to take up with the other alternative; but with the one or the other, in this case, he must, in the mean time, rest satisfied—*utrum horum?* &c. &c.

But, if Mr. Bagot be honestly inclined to correct our English Translation of the New Testament, I beg leave to direct his attention to one or two passages which appear to me inaccurately rendered, and whose inaccuracy must have considerably influenced his own worship, and

that of many besides. One of these has been suggested by the phrase which occurs in the very text we have been examining, ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου, "in my name." Now, in Philipp. ii. 10. where we meet with the very same terms in the original, it has been rendered by our Translators, "that *at the name* of Jesus every knee should bow." Mr. Bagot knows very well that these Greek terms have been every where else in the New Testament rendered, and correctly rendered, "*in the name*" of Jesus, as our Mediator. The English reader knows that this is the form of expression in every instance, save Philip ii. 10. And any one may satisfy himself how erroneously it has been rendered there, by so translating the expression any where else. Take, for example, John xiv. 13. "Whatsoever ye shall ask *in my name*," ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου; and try how it will sound to render it thus, "Whatsoever ye shall ask *at my name*, believing, ye shall receive." Then why was it thus rendered in Philip ii. 10? The solution is easy,—it was convenient to retain the old and popular superstition of bowing at the sound of the name of Jesus, and therefore it was thought expedient to impose upon the vulgar, by making it appear as if this practice had the sanction of Scripture itself for its continuance! The "name of Jesus" is grateful in the ear and venerable in the heart of every Christian; but there is nothing in this, nor in any other portion of Scripture, which should lead Christians to offer it a *more profound homage*, than even to the *name of God himself*. Mr. Bagot is too good a Greek scholar not to know that Philip, ii. 10. is improperly rendered in our Translation; yet, I presume, he regularly practises a rite, which has nothing to countenance it but that mis-translation; and thereby as regularly encourages the same practice in others. Why has he not set about correcting our translation here? The solution is equally easy:—it is convenient to "bow" before higher authority,—even that authority which claims a "power to decree rites and ceremonies," in religion.

Lest, however, I should be altogether led away from my subject, I shall solicit Mr. Bagot's attention but to one other mis-translation. It is to be found in Acts xii. 4. ("intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.") The Greek word here translated "*Easter*," is τὸ πάσχα,—literally "*the Passover*," an annual festi-

val of the Jews. Easter and the observance of Easter, were wholly unknown in the Apostolic age. But, before the period when our translation was made, it had become a popular festival in Christendom: it was accordingly found convenient to indulge the people in a few things of this description; and, as the Reformed Churches *professed* to build upon the foundation of Scripture, it was thought expedient that the *name of Easter*, at least, should be found there. This name, however, is anything but of Scripture origin. It is nothing more or less than a corruption of the name of the Saxon Goddess Eostre, whose annual festival was usually held about the same season of the year! Why has not Mr. Bagot set himself to correct the translation here? The solution is still equally easy:—it is convenient, in compliance with the “authority” aforesaid, and to use his own phrase,—“to take advantage” of a mis-translation, and, under cover thereof, to acquiesce in and countenance an observance unknown to Christianity in her pure and primitive appointments.

I trust the preceding observations cannot be offensive to any of the sincere but unlettered Christians, who have been accustomed to the observances alluded to. Nothing could be farther from my mind than to give them intentional offence. But they may serve, in some measure, to open their eyes to the tricks which have been practiced upon them, even in the solemnities of their worship, by those who know better.

The reader is possibly satisfied with the sample which has been already given them of Mr. Bagot’s incoherent statements, and inconclusive reasoning, in defence of the Trinity; and if he choose to carry his own examination farther, he will almost every where find premises at open war with each other, and conclusions alike at variance with Scripture, and with common sense. The truth is, that both in assumption, and in argument, Mr. Bagot is a perfect Proteus. In every other page, he starts up upon you in a new shape; and as you proceed through his treatise, you are surprised at the strange variety of aspects which he presents, with the sudden shifting of scenes, and the mass of heterogeneous objects which are made to pass in quick succession before your eyes.

But, he is, it seems, both a Trinitarian and a Unitarian; and indeed, it is somewhat difficult from his book, to conjecture whether he be the one or the other. Sometimes, as at the commencement, and toward the close of his treatise, he takes the full form of an unqualified Athanasian, insisting on the absolute necessity, "before all things," of believing in the three distinct co-equal persons in the Deity; and denouncing everything which falls short of this Creed. Yet he falls greatly short of it himself: for he admits, that in the Trinity, there is established a scale of *first, second, and third, Persons*; and informs us that they are vested with distinct offices, and different relations towards each other, in reference at least, to the work of man's redemption,—"*The Father devising, the Son achieving, and the Holy Ghost applying.*" (Page 44.)

In manifold statements and explanations of this kind, it is plain that Mr. Bagot savours strongly of Arianism: for as, in what he calls "the official manifestation of the three Persons," he has all along admitted a regular subordination of office,—asserting that "the Father holds the rank of President; that in this capacity he has deputed the Son to the office of Mediator; and that he has united with the Son in sending forth the Holy Ghost, the Comforter;" and, as he says, in page 135, "The New Testament professes to be a history of the official undertaking of the three Persons for the benefit of man;" so, I think it is plain he must have looked somewhere else than to the New Testament, for the account of that perfect equality, or absolute identity of the Three Persons, of whose "official undertaking," in a regular subordination, he professes to regard the New Testament as being the history.

And there are other portions of his book, which would lead you to suspect that Mr. Bagot is deeply tinctured even with Socinianism. Let him not be alarmed—let no one be surprised at this. There is a much closer affinity between these apparently opposite extremes than may be generally thought. He says, page 81, "We do not, for instance, suppose that the *man Christ Jesus*, possessed in himself underived and independent power to perform miracles; the power he exerted was in him by virtue of his connection with Deity." This is nothing more than any Humanitarian would say



of Moses and Elias, and of Peter, and James, and John, as well as of Jesus of Nazareth. He also looks upon the Saviour simply as a *man*, miraculously endow- ed and in union with God—but as possessing no “un- derived and independent power,” and fitted for his high office only “by virtue of his connection with the Deity.” Mr. Bagot observes, page 149, that our Lord “dis- played during his continuance upon earth, every cha- racteristic feature of a perfect and entire human nature ;” and he proceeds to support this view of the nature of Christ, through this and the succeeding pages, by a train of argument such as Socinus himself, and his fol- lowers have uniformly employed ; for Socinus, like Mr. Bagot, believed that Jesus was a perfect man, “in con- nection with the Deity,”—a man in whom God dwelt, and to whom he imparted largely of his spirit and power. And Socinus farther agreed with Mr. Bagot, in what appears to me to be a great error on the part of both, in that, whilst he regarded Christ as nothing more than a man, he yet worshipped him as God ! But, notwithstanding the incongruous and irreconcilable state- ments to be met with throughout Mr. Bagot’s entire treatise ; and though, in looking through it you may be sometimes puzzled to know what his distinguishing sen- timents are ; yet it is the professed design of his book to establish the Athanasian view of the nature of God, and of Christ ; namely, first—that God consists of a plurality of persons ; that this plurality is limited to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; that each of these three Persons possesses two distinct characters—the “ ab- stract,” and “ official ;”—that, for the recovery of fallen man, each person laid down his “ abstract,” and assum- ed his “ official” character ; that, even in the changed circumstances of an unchangeable Being, “ the Father still retains a temporary superiority,” still holds the “ office of President ;”—of head, to whom the Son and Holy Ghost are subordinate and obedient ; that the same things may be predicated of all the three Persons in their “ abstract,” but not in their “ official” capacity ; that though they be distinct persons, they are neverthe- less the same ; though “ subordinate,” they are never- theless “ perfectly equal ;” and that, though *each Per- son is by himself* to be acknowledged God, there is nevertheless *but one God !* And, secondly, Mr. Bagot

holds, that the Christ, the Messiah, he who was sent of the Father to be the Saviour of the world, is the second Person of the above Trinity, manifested in the flesh; that in this new and changed capacity, he possesses, not merely the “two natures,” usually contended for by Trinitarians; but the three-fold nature of God, and man, and mediator; and that, when he comes before us in the Gospel, he is to be understood as speaking and acting, sometimes in the first character, sometimes in the second, and sometimes in the third; although we nowhere in scripture meet with any key of interpretation, by which to ascertain when he exhibits himself in either. So that, whilst, with respect to God, we are in Mr. Bagot’s book, presented with *three distinct and equal Persons in one nature*; with respect to Christ we are presented with *three distinct and very unequal natures in one person*! And then Mr. Bagot winds up his history of the “official undertaking” of the three Persons of the Trinity, and of its termination, in these extraordinary words—page 145,—“each person shall *lay aside* his official character, and *resume* his original condition of supreme Godhead!” If this be consistent with the doctrine of the gospel, let the reader judge.

Such is Mr. Bagot’s general statement of Trinitarian views regarding the nature of God, and of Christ. I have in several letters, brought together a comment on some of those inconsistent and contradictory explanations by which he has attempted to support this statement. And I now put it to any single-minded and intelligent reader of scripture—I will venture to put it to Mr. Bagot himself—whether this Being whom he has thus portrayed—this Being of triple personality, of varying character, and perpetual mutation, bear any resemblance to the One, peerless, underived, unequalled, and immutable God of the Bible? I think I may safely leave this question to be answered by the reader, and subscribe myself

Faithfully yours,

JOHN MITCHEL

## THE CREATION, FLOOD, AND END OF THE WORLD.

Genesis 1.—“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void”—v. 1. 2. It was at first a confused and shapeless mass till by its rotatory motion in its progress round the Sun, it assumed a globular form diversified, however, with heights and hollows. (v. 9.) Still the atmosphere was loaded with mists and vapours, and various substances were floating through the air which obstructed the light, “and darkness was upon the face of the deep”—v. 2. These being dispelled by a mighty wind, (v. 2.)\* or having subsided and discharged their waters on the ground, (v. 7.) the light began to appear.—(v. 3.)

The sky then appeared (v. 6.) expanded above the earth, and the sun, moon, and stars became visible.—(v. 16.) The waters then next descended from the higher parts into the bason prepared for them, and formed the sea.—(v. 10.) “And then the dry land appeared.”—(v. 9.)

Thus the first element prepared for the reception of inhabitants was water; accordingly, God said, “let the waters bring forth abundantly.”—(v. 20.) The earth being now drained of its moisture, and warmed by the genial heat of the Sun, was fit for producing grass, herbs and fruits.—(v. 11. 12.) The next element provided with inhabitants was the air, now purified from the dregs of chaos: “and God created fowl that might fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.”—(v. 20.) Meanwhile the earth was furnished with abundance of food for the various kinds of animals.” And God said “let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind: and it was so.”—(v. 24.)

Lastly, “God said let us make *mankind* in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” “So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them”—(v. 26, 27.)

Thus man became his vicegerent to cultivate and embellish the earth, (c. ii. v. 15.) and to exercise dominion and

---

\* See Isaiah xl. 7.

a providential care over the inferior creatures "like the God of this new world." "God said let us make man"—not let the earth produce man : he had a nobler origin.

Thus our globe took its station in the solar system. The superior planets were probably of a later creation, since it is more likely that the system should be gradually extended than that our planet should be obtruded among the pre-existing orbits.

This appears to me to be the substance of the rational and natural account of creation handed down by Moses. It contains all that is necessary for us to know, or that it is possible to communicate to us. It is enough for us to know, that the world is the work of God, that when he reviewed it, he found it very good ; and like a kind and gracious parent blessed the living creatures, that he had made ; a proof that he takes pleasure in our happiness, and is desirous that we should rejoice in our being. To seek for more, and to make it subservient to human speculation, or to cavil at particular expressions is "to handle the word of God deceitfully." This has been often done.

Having therefore, stated what Moses has said, it may be proper to state what he has not. He has not fixed on any period for the commencement of creation, for this was impossible, since it began before our measures of time existed, before the sun and the moon were appointed to "be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years." He could not more distinctly mark any point in eternity than by the words that he has used "in the beginning." Neither has he said that the heavens and the earth were created at the same time. The successive stages of the creation he has distinguished by the word days, but this cannot mean our natural day, as three of those periods or days were passed before there could be either evenings or mornings in our sense of the words. These words he uses by anticipation. Neither does he say morning and evening, but evening and morning anticipating the reckoning of the Hebrews, who began their day from sunset. In general we must make large allowance for the peculiarities of eastern idiom and primeval language. Some think that Moses speaks according to optical, not physical truth ; that is, that he describes the effects of creation optically, or as they would have appeared to the eye. Thus to a spec-

tator, if such there had been, the first appearance of the light, the sun and the stars might resemble and be mistaken for a new creation. To some it may appear preposterous to assign the creation of light to the first day, and to defer that of the Sun till the fourth; but light is an element universally diffused, and may be extracted from any hard, combustible, phosphoric or electrical substance, independently of the Sun. Agreeably to this, what we translate—"let there be lights," is more accurately expressed in Hebrew, by a form of the word that implies instruments or excitors of light. Many suppose that the Sun emits no part of its substance, in the form of light, but operates upon the light diffused through the universe and renders it visible—as sound is not a separate element, but only an effect produced by the motion of the air. Neither is there any conceivable reason for limiting each of these grand operations to twelve of our hours. It is not supposable that the sea and the land could be separated in so short a space, or that all the vegetable productions of the earth should spring up in that time without the aid of the sun; still less, that one of our days should suffice for the production of all the fish in the sea, or all the fowls of the air; and another, for the growth of the innumerable tribes of animals that people the earth.\* "With God all things are possible;" but this is not his usual mode of acting; nor was there any reason or necessity for it. God was not limited in time. What the duration of these periods was is equally impossible and unprofitable for us to guess, or for Moses to explain.

The next expression which, notwithstanding the simplicity of the sacred writer, may be tortured into ambiguity, is the word "created." Philosophers may dispute about the eternity of matter: some may allege, that it was pre-existent to the creation: others may insist, that the universe was created out of nothing.

---

\* I admit without hesitation the aphorism of Linnaeus, that, "in the beginning God created one pair only of every living species, which has a diversity of sex."—SIR WM. JONES'S WORKS, vol. 3. 186.

From the words of Moses—the vivaciousness of seeds and the variety of plants which spring up in mountains and deserts, when first turned up by the plough, may we conjecture, that the ground was originally impregnated with seeds, to remain dormant, till required for use, and called forth by the industry of man?



I am satisfied, from other sources of argument, that this last was the fact, and that according to Paul, "the things that are seen," the visible world, "were not made of things that appeared," of any pre-existing substance; but I cannot call in Moses to my assistance. He has kept clear of all these questions. The determination of this point made no part of his commission; and therefore he received no instructions upon it, nor did he venture to give any opinion of his own. It is not to be expected, that such a primitive language as Hebrew should possess any single word to express such a metaphysical idea as creation out of nothing. There is not a language in existence perhaps, that can boast of such a word. It is a stranger to those refined and philosophical languages, Latin and Greek. It is equally unknown to modern tongues; and in our own the word *create* is employed with the same latitude as in Latin, from which it is derived. It is some times used to express the origin of the universe, and sometimes the creation of some insignificant office, or the appointment of some petty magistrate. In Hebrew, the original word in its primitive signification, signifies to form, polish, or finish; but this is of no force on either side of the question, for the first meanings of all words are taken from sensible appearances or manual operations.

As Moses does not say, that the heavens and the earth were created at any particular time, so neither does he assert, that the heavenly bodies were made all at once. We have reason to think from some late discoveries, that some of the celestial orbs may perish and be dissolved, while the remainder continue in existence; and this may lead us to suppose, that their origin as well as their extinction, may be independent of each other, and take place at different times. Worlds and systems may be annihilated every day throughout the immensity of space: and we are assured, that it will come to our turn at some uncertain and unexpected period, perhaps to-morrow. Moses, however, does not implicate himself in any of these speculations. Many violent changes may have taken place on the surface of the globe, which may have overwhelmed the creatures that inhabited both the land and the water. Some of our modern philosophers are confident, that they see traces of such convulsions prior to the creation of man;

and this may have been the case without any impeachment of the veracity or authority of Moses.

We know, that there are agents in nature, capable of producing the most violent convulsions, not only on the surface, but in the body of the earth. These are in continual operation, and have frequently in the form of earthquakes and volcanoes produced the most alarming effects, even in our own days. History informs us, that they occasioned much more formidable changes in former times. By examining the structure of the globe, it has been ascertained that it has been repeatedly convulsed, torn to pieces and disarranged at remote periods. There is reason to believe, that some of these catastrophes took place before it was occupied by living creatures; and others, after the creation of the inferior animals, but before it was inhabited by man. Amid these ruins of a former world, the remains of animals, now extinct, have been discovered. There is little or no doubt that the tops of high mountains were covered by the sea.

These mighty agents are sufficient not only to produce a deluge, but to destroy the globe: to gain credit not only to the testimony of Moses, but also to the prediction of the apostle Peter, with respect to the final dissolution of the world—"by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth which are now, are by the same word, kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up." In like manner, Moses assures us in the name of the Lord, that all flesh shall not any more be cut off by the waters of a flood. By the heavens and the earth are to be understood this earth and its atmosphere, which forms our sky or visible heavens.

It is admitted that there are powers in nature adequate to the production of an universal deluge. It is notorious, from submarine substances found on the tops of mountains, that either the sea rose above the mountains,

or that the mountains were once at the bottom of the sea. Philosophers go so far as to say, "that if there is any circumstance thoroughly established in geology, it is this, that the crust of our globe has been subjected to a great and sudden revolution, the epoch of which cannot be dated farther back than five or six thousand years; that this revolution buried all the countries which were before inhabited by men and other animals; and that the same revolution laid dry the bed of the ocean, which now forms all the countries at present inhabited."—*Cuvier*.\*

Thus the deluge was occasioned or followed by the subsidence of the earth, below the primitive sea, the bottom of which then became the earth which we now inhabit; the sea covering the old, depressed earth, which then became the bottom of the sea. This accounts for the irregular and shattered state of the strata of the earth; the marine productions found on the highest mountains; the vast sandy deserts of Arabia and Africa; the round or water-worn stones with which our soil is filled, and particularly the transportation of animals inhabiting southern latitudes, whose remains are now found in northern climates, congealed in frozen regions, or accumulated in caverns.

In short, it argues the greatest ignorance and folly to suppose that any change in nature is physically impossible. Were the rotatory or progressive motion of the earth, or either, to be stopped for a single minute, the most stately edifices, and the strongest fortifications, would be levelled with the ground; the mountains would be shivered into fragments, and the sea would immediately produce an universal deluge; the earth itself would be shattered and crumbled into dust, dissipated and lost in the immensity of space. Besides those deep-seated convulsions in the body of the earth, its

---

\* "We might produce the same account of the Creation and the Fall, expressed by symbols, very nearly similar, from the *Puránas* themselves, and even from the *Veda*, which appears to stand next in antiquity to the five books of *Moses*.

"The Universal Deluge is an historical event admitted as true by every nation, to whose literature we have access, and particularly by the ancient *Hindus*, who have allotted an entire *Purána* to the detail of that event, which they relate, as usual, in symbols or allegories."—*Sir W. Jones's Works*, vol. 3, p. 192.

surface is continually undergoing very important changes from natural causes operating for revolving ages.

These elementary agents are also sufficient to accomplish the prophecy of St. Peter, by shattering, dissolving, or consuming the whole frame and fabric of the earth, if it be the will of God, that they should do so. That there are vast bodies of internal fire, deeply seated in the earth; or at least materials by which they are frequently kindled, is evident from the two hundred openings or vents through which they are continually emitting smoke and flames, and ejecting the very entrails of the earth. That these exist under the ocean is plain, from the immense extent to which the earth is convulsed, even at opposite sides of the sea, by the earthquakes they occasion;\* by the islands that have been thrown up from the bottom of the ocean, even in our days; and by the appearances of continents and islands torn asunder in times remote. By the union of these elements, fire and water, an universal deluge or the disruption and bursting of the globe might be effected. It is thought by some, that this catastrophe has been suffered by one of the planets, and that its shattered parts compose those smaller bodies, Ceres and Pallas, that have been recently discovered revolving through our system. How far these observations may be confirmed by experience we cannot tell; but enough has been ascertained to show that modern discoveries, as the structure of our globe, have confirmed the narrative of Moses, and the prediction of Peter, instead of weakening them, as some timid friends of revelation have apprehended, and some of its enemies vainly boast. Philosophy confirms all that revelation has asserted; and shows the possibility of every thing that it has foretold.

---

\* Loch Ness in the Highlands of Scotland, is said to be "violently agitated when any other part of the world is undergoing the phenomena of an earthquake. This remarkable peculiarity was particularly observable on the 1st of November, 1755, at the time of the great earthquake of Lisbon. The water rose rapidly, and flowed up the lake with amazing impetuosity, the waves being carried more than two hundred yards up the river Oich, breaking on its banks five feet above the level of the river. It continued ebbing for about an hour; at the end of which time, a wave greater than the others, terminated the commotion, overflowing the north bank of the lake to the extent of thirty feet."

The curious and wonderful discoveries made by modern philosophers, not at all partial to scriptural authority, by exploring the bowels of the earth, evince not only the general truth of the Mosaical History, but confirm the order in which the creation of the several parts of nature is said to have been effected. From the remains of animals and plants which they find petrified at different depths, and in different substances, geologists conclude, that marine animals and plants were prior to those that occupy the land. And from the appearance of human remains, only in the higher strata or latter formation, they agree that man was created at a subsequent era.

Let us now review the ground that we have passed. It appears that Moses is not implicated in any of the abstruse metaphysical questions that may be agitated concerning the creation; and that what he does say is agreeable to the theoretical deductions of enlightened reason, and even consistent with the observations of practical philosophers. To every man this must be highly satisfactory, even to those who have no doubt of the divine authority of scripture. It is truly amazing that after the lapse of so many ages, after the various systems of creation and theories of the earth, that have been devised by every nation capable of such speculations, this primitive record should be found to be consonant, and alone consonant to actual experiment on the substance of this globe. This should not only confirm our confidence in the book of Genesis, but give us a rational assurance that in process of time, the whole system of revelation with which it is connected, will receive similar confirmation, either from the completion of prophesy, or by discoveries in philosophy, natural or moral. We may even anticipate with more assurance that awful and final catastrophe, the dissolution of nature, which no pen shall ever record, no mortal tongue shall survive to tell. That dreadful consummation may be followed by another creation: and as *we* now explore the remains of a former world, and the history of ancient revolutions, and of the universal deluge; so future races of men may build conjectures on our remains, and trace the vestiges of the men and animals that now exist, and of the heavens and the earth that now are. We now dig up the remains of the antediluvian world, and



the cities and monuments of former generations; but after the general conflagration, when the earth shall be consumed, and the very elements of all terrestrial substances melted with fervent heat, not a trace of human existence may remain. If it should please the Almighty to renew the materials of this world, and render it again the abode of living creatures, the philosophers of a future creation may search in vain even for those obscure indications of our existence by which *we* are able to speculate on the condition of the antedeluvian world. But we are assured that virtuous and holy men will survive in a more exalted state, spectators of the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds, to adore the Almighty and Eternal One, and to admire the awful displays of his creative and annihilating power; and the benign dispensations of his inexhaustible grace, till time shall be swallowed up in eternity, and be no more.

ERASMUS.

---

#### ON THE STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

---

“Understandest thou what thou readest?”—Acts, viii. 30.

---

IF we were to judge from the tenets which have long prevailed in the world, and which prevail to a large extent even at the present day, we should be led to think that a great many people are as ignorant of the true meaning of the Scriptures, as the Eunuch, to whom Philip addressed the above question, was of the meaning of the passage of Isaiah which he was reading; though, very probably they might not be so ingenuous in confessing that ignorance. I think, however, many a man imagines he believes in all the dogmas of Calvinism, when in reality he does not. My reason for thinking so is, that I have never yet found any one who did not both contradict on one point what he had advanced on another, and act directly contrary to at least a part of his professed creed. Another presumptive proof that Calvinists either do not understand the Bible, or that part of their belief is imaginary, is, that no one is capable of believing for a moment such absurdities on any other subject as they pretend to find in the volume of inspiration. Where will you find a man who, on any point in mathematics, philosophy, or in short,

any subject in nature except theology, will believe that three are one, and one three, and that each of these three is equal to all the three united? The most rigid, bigoted Trinitarian alive would think it an insult to his understanding, to tell him that such a thing was possible. Again, is there any man who on any of the ordinary affairs of life, could be brought to think that the giver and the receiver, the sender and the bearer of a message, are exactly the very same; or that in any circumstances it was possible for a son to be of the same age as his father? No man would hesitate to say that it would be highly unjust in an earthly parent to issue commands to his children, which he well knew some of them were unable to obey, and to punish them in the most dreadful manner for not obeying them; while on others of his offspring who had been no more obedient, he heaped the highest rewards in his power to bestow. Neither would any one think it just that a terrestrial father should inflict punishment on one of his children for the fault of another, especially if the offence had been committed before the child who was made to suffer was born; or that a judge of assize should condemn a man to death for murder, though he knew perfectly well that this man was innocent, and could not possibly have committed the crime with which he was charged. When I find men who will fully agree with me respecting an event in history, or a description of a foreign country, or on any point in morals, science, or natural history, ascribing such manifest injustice to their Heavenly Father, I cannot but conclude that such men have not used the same means of arriving at the truth in the latter case as in the former, and that consequently they do not "understand what they read" in the scriptures.

I know a Calvinist who, on being advised to read the Bible as he would another history, and try whether he could thus find his own views inculcated in it, freely acknowledged that he could not read it in this manner, for, said he, I cannot study the scriptures without the grace of God to assist me to understand them. I should not have thought this expression worthy of any particular notice, had I not believed it to be part of the system to read the Bible in a manner different from all other books. This "grace" is undoubtedly highly desirable, and very necessary; but how, I would ask, is it

likely to be attained? Surely not by ascribing to the words contained in the Bible a meaning different from that which they convey when found elsewhere. This idea is an effectual bar to all free inquiry, for whoever adopts it, has a very convenient way of setting aside the strongest and plainest passages which he may find opposed to his favourite opinions. Such a mode of gaining instruction is something like attempting to lay the foundation of our edifice in the air. It is beginning at the wrong end. He who thus acts may be a virtuous man, and a good member of society, but it is not his professed belief makes him so—nay, if he be virtuous, it is owing to the natural purity and dignity of his nature, and the power of conscience, and rather in opposition to his creed; for the doctrine that a man's actions in this life has no influence on his state in the next, is, if not a premium for vice, at least an indemnity for it. Unless, however, he exercises his reason, the noblest gift of God to man, he buries his talent in the earth; for certainly it is in proportion as we use our faculties, that God will bless our efforts in the pursuit of truth; and having invoked the divine blessing, it is surely according as we bring an unbiassed, unprejudiced judgment to the inquiry that heavenly light will dawn upon our minds. The Bible is formed of the same materials as other books—printed on the same paper, the same letters form the words, and the Calvinist must, whether he will or not, like other men, use the same eyes in reading it, the same hands in turning over the leaves, and why should we not use the same powers of mind in interpreting its meaning? It is true the Bible contains many words and expressions, our conception of which must be extremely defective, because a finite mind can never fully comprehend that which is infinite. Our ideas of the true import of the words heaven, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, &c. must, owing to our limited capacities, fall far short of the reality; and if it were possible for us to arrive at the meaning of such words by any other than the ordinary course, we should be quite right to adopt it; but since we have no faculties fitted exclusively to the interpretation of scriptural truths, we should surely have recourse to those which we have no reason to think prove false guides on other subjects. Let it not be said that I am endeavour-

ing to bring down the Word of Truth to the level of an ordinary history. I consider it of infinitely more value than any other book that ever was written; and it is because I think so, and because I believe it would be more highly appreciated, if better understood, that I would have my Calvinistic brethren read it in a manner different from what they do—if I may judge of the tree by the fruit. Perhaps it was the fact that all consider it the most important book we possess, which first gave rise to the idea that it should be read in a manner different from all others. I think, however the manufacturers and promulgators of creeds are chiefly answerable for the consequences. A creed would be a harmless composition if it were only looked at through the medium of the Bible; but it too often happens with those who adopt such works, that the Bible is read through the medium of the creed, even though it should distort its contents as much as some glasses distort every object which is seen through them. But the creed, once adopted, must be supported, no matter at what expense of truth, justice, reason or consistency. A text, when seen in the Bible, and taken in its natural connexion with other passages, may present a very different appearance from what it may be made to present in a controversial essay—nay it may be made to convey a meaning quite the reverse of what it did in its original position. The injustice of the system of taking only part of a passage of scripture, so common with orthodox writers, might be strongly shown by applying it to other subjects. Try arithmetic, for instance, two and three and five make ten. Now a man who wished to establish a new mode of addition, might, according to this system, quote as much of the above as suited his purpose, and say “three and five make ten,” and give the name of any man who had ever published a treatise on arithmetic as authority for what he said. Here the words given are correct as far as they go, and it would be quite as fair to do this, as to support particular doctrines by insulated texts of scripture, or in the manner it has sometimes been done.

Those who believe in the doctrine of original sin appear to think that if Adam had kept the commandment, there would never have been any sin in the world; that God made a compact with him to the effect that, if he

refrained from eating the fruit, none of his posterity should be subjected to the same trial ; but that if he broke the commandment, they should all be liable to the same penalty as himself ; and that, since God thought proper to enter into a covenant of this nature with Adam, it does not become us to question the propriety of it. Not one word, however, of all this can I find in the Bible, though it is easy enough to find it in works which profess to be taken from it. My opinion of the matter is, that the command of whatever kind it was, would have remained equally binding on all Adam's posterity as on himself, according as they became able to understand the nature of the obligation ; that though he had kept it ever so faithfully, there is scarcely any probability that there would have been less vice in the world than there is at present ; for we have no reason to think that Adam was not as able to keep it as any one could be who would be born after him ; and that consequently, it would have been broken by some one, and this would have let in the flood of evil upon us as effectually as Adam's transgression could possibly do it. It would have been favouring the children much above the parent, if he was to be subjected to trial, and such a heavy penalty annexed to his failure, while if he withstood the ordeal, they would not be liable to any trial whatever. This would have been as unjust to Adam, as it would be to his posterity, to punish them for the fault of which he only was guilty, and which he alone had an opportunity of committing. The only way in which I think original sin can affect us is, that there is so much evil in the world before we enter upon it, that we can never have an opportunity of beginning on fair terms. We can never have a fair start in the race we have to run. This, and our own acts arising therefrom, is in my opinion amply sufficient to account for all the wickedness we see around us, without either ascribing it to an inherent corruption of our nature, or making Adam accountable for our evil deeds, who doubtless had enough of his own to answer for, independent of ours.

I firmly believe it is original sin, acting in this manner that makes so many Calvinists at the present day. If it were possible to annihilate, at one swoop, all the creeds, confessions of faith, catechisms, &c. in which



opinions are maintained equally derogatory to the justice, mercy, and goodness of God, and to the native powers and dignity of human nature, which not only cannot be found in scripture, but are diametrically opposed to the whole tenor of revelation; and to destroy at the same time the effects such works are calculated to produce on the mind of man, that have been so industriously and perseveringly handed down from father to son—and thus to afford to the rising generation, and those yet unborn, a clear stage, and an opportunity of studying the Bible, free of all pre-conceived ideas, I am convinced that in a short time a staunch Calvinist would be nearly as rarely to be found as a man wholly devoid of every kind of sin. But I am well aware that such a consummation, however “devoutly to be wished,” is, in the present state of society unattainable,

“For faith, fanatic faith, once wedded fast  
To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last.”

Some Calvinists may deny that they believe implicitly in all the doctrines I have attributed to them. Some of the advocates of the system appear to have such an innate love for things foreign from scripture, that they adopt the name of a human leader, though they do not, as they say, believe in all the tenets that leader taught. This is a matter of taste, and as there is no fixed standard in such matters, I should not blame them for it, if they did not assume that their doing so was a sufficient reason why their opponents should be content with receiving a designation derived from another human leader, with whom they agree in some points though not in every thing. This is something like as if one man were to say to another, I am willing that you and all men should call me a thief, though I never was addicted to stealing; and *because* I am so, I insist that you should give me liberty to call you a liar, though you are as little in the habit of violating the ninth commandment as I am of violating the eighth.

AN ELDER'S SON.

## ON PREDESTINATION.

[WE have been requested by a valuable correspondent to give some information concerning several subjects of which Predestination is one. This brought to our recollection an excellent tract, in the form of a letter, by Dr. Benson, an eminent English Dissenter. It contains a very judicious and correct explanation of the language of Scripture on this subject. We shall publish nearly the whole of it in this and the succeeding number. It is contrary to our usual practice to deal much in extracts, but as this is to all intents and purposes an original article to almost all our readers, we do not feel any scruples in printing it. Nor shall we in other cases of a similar kind, especially where by so doing we can bring before our readers some of those distinguished divines that so ably supported our cause in former times.]

“I refer you to other authors, for the two different schemes and the arguments *pro* and *con*. What I propose, is, to adhere to the simplicity which is in Christ Jesus, or in his doctrine, as it is left upon record in the New Testament. Nor is the subject of small moment, if we recollect what scruples it has raised in the breasts of the pious; especially those of a melancholy disposition—who have been afraid of their everlasting concerns; as if, after all their best endeavours to be virtuous and holy, and to persevere therein, they might yet, possibly, be found, not the vessels of mercy, but, vessels of wrath, appointed to destruction.—And, on the other hand, what presumption it has occasioned, even in some of the most abandoned of men, who have imagined that, possibly, they may belong to the election of grace, though they have gone on to live the lives of reprobates.

“Beverovicus, a learned physician, wanted to be satisfied, ‘whether the end of men’s lives was unalterably fixed and determined?’ before he would pretend to practise the art of physic.

“I myself wanted to be satisfied, upon a twofold account, ‘whether the actions of men, and their final state, were unalterably fixed, and absolutely and unconditionally decreed? or only conditionally? Or, whether the texts in holy scripture, that speak of this subject, are to be understood literally, or figuratively?’

“First,—that I might endeavour to regulate my own actions, if free, and might prepare for a future state of happiness, if decreed only conditionally. Or, if otherwise, that I might acquiesce, as much as possible, in what was not to be resisted, or avoided. And,

“Secondly,—as I was in prospect of undertaking the care of souls, I wanted to know, ‘whether it would be to any purpose?’ Concluding that it could answer no end, to persuade such as have no power, nor could do any thing but what they did, as chained down to one course of action, by an irreversible decree; in which case, arguments and motives, promises and threatnings, reproofs and exhortations, could avail nothing. But, if it appeared that men have some power given them in creation; that they may reasonably expect all proper, divine assistance; and that their final and everlasting state is decreed only conditionally; I might set myself to the sacred work of the ministry, in hopes of succeeding in some measure, and doing at least some good.

“Considering it in these views, I could not look upon it as a matter of mere speculation, or as a subject for men to display their talents, or exercise their wits, about; but as a point of very great moment, and which lies at the foundation of all practical religion. For, which ever side is found to be true, it draws after it numberless consequences: the two schemes being as different as light and darkness, and as distant from one another as the east is from the west.

“Some studious and well-disposed men, in their unguarded zeal, have sought to recommend the sacred scriptures, by pretending that they contain every thing. Whereas, their plain design is to instruct men only in religion.

“To search, therefore, for all arts and sciences in the Bible, would be just as wise as to seek the laws of England in the Grammar, or a system of natural philosophy in the Statute-book. The scripture—like other authors—should be read with that view with which it was written.

“To the poor the gospel was preached; and for them its language is calculated; and therefore, it speaks after a popular, familiar way. Studious persons may look beyond common appearances, and may have both pleasure and advantage from their researches. But day-

labourers must take their notions from common appearances; and that will answer well enough the common purposes of life, and be ground sufficient for the essentials of godliness.

“Had it only been remembered, that God adapts his thoughts and expressions to the capacities of them, to whom he speaks, as all wise men endeavour to do, the flouts of some gay and fashionable writers, upon the style and manner of the sacred oracles, would appear groundless, and the sallies of a false wit, which wants the foundation of truth and knowledge.

“The principal design of the christian revelation, was not to make men philosophers, orators, or critics; but, which is of vastly more moment, to make men good; to instruct an ignorant, and reform a vicious world; to teach persons of lower, as well as of higher capacities, the way to true happiness. Its plainness and simplicity may make it despised by those wise and prudent heads, who are puffed up with knowledge, falsely so called; whilst the discovery appears noble, and is grateful to babes; *i. e.* to persons meek, and teachable enough to be instructed in God’s own way.

“The insinuation of a parable, the easy and pleasant instruction of an history, with all the moving, artless, methods, wherewith holy writ captivates the well-disposed, strike the minds of men deeper, and more agreeably than the dry rules and hard terms of a system.

“This general hint of the plainness of sacred scripture, and of the end, for which it was given us, might help to clear up numberless other points, which are at present perplexed.

“But what I would now principally apply it to, is the doctrine of the divine fore-knowledge and decrees.

“And, in order thereto, let us see how it holds in other cases.

“The great God himself, his nature, perfections, and operations, are thus popularly described; and so are also spiritual and everlasting things. And thus, indeed, they must be described to us, or not at all. Were invisible things called by proper names of their own, and described, without comparing them to something already known, we could not have any notion of them. But God has given us the best notions, we can have, by condescending to compare them to things seen and

known. Thus heaven is compared to an inheritance, to riches, to a city or country, to a church or temple, to a crown and kingdom, to a garden, to a banquet, and to many like things, well known, and highly esteemed upon earth.

“The miseries of bad men in the future state, are compared to the pain caused by fire and brimstone; and by a worm, or serpent, perpetually preying upon a man’s vitals, to being imprisoned in a dungeon, and to the horrors of death; *i. e.* it is compared to the most dreadful things, we now know, or can imagine.

“All which descriptions are not to be taken in the literal sense; but only, as intimating the superlative happiness of the one state, and misery of the other.

“Thus also God, though he is a spirit, has represented himself in holy writ, as if he had a body, in analogy to the parts and powers of human bodies; yet our most noble and just ideas of God arise from comparing him to our own souls or spirits. And thus the holy scripture compares him, when it tells us, that backsliders his soul hates. And not only a soul in general, but also the passions of the human soul are ascribed to God, *viz.* anger, vengeance, fear, hope, grief, sorrow, love, pity, and the like. All which are not to be understood literally, but figuratively. Thus, for instance, God can do all things, that man can do, by any, or all the parts and members of the body; can see as well as if he had eyes, hear as well as if he had ears, act as well as if he had hands, understand as well as if he had an head, or heart, &c.

“And, again, he will inflict punishment upon the wicked and finally impenitent, from cool reason and unerring judgment, as certainly, as if he was roused with fear, anger, or revenge: and will make all the truly virtuous and holy, as if he was most sensibly touched with hope or pity; and his own happiness, in some measure, depend upon theirs. He will alter his treatment of such as backslide, as really as if he had repented of the favour shown them. And so will he act, on the contrary, towards a returning prodigal, as repenting of his threatenings.

“Thus, the outward actions of God and man are, in some things, alike; but the inward principles widely differ. Infinite reason and unerring wisdom always de-



events, knows the end from the beginning ; and from ancient times, the things that have or shall come to pass. And in one word, all God's conduct is as wise and rational as if he had the best laws and decrees, and governed himself by them. But then, though the effects be such, as would argue consultations and consequent decrees in man, the principles of actions widely differ. What need of one moment's consultation in him, who sees all things at one view? what need has infinite perfection of the helps necessary to finite and imperfect creatures?

“ Previous consultations, and subsequent resolutions are only needed, where the ideas are short, finite, and successive : defects, or imperfections, by no means to be ascribed unto the all-perfect deity !

“ But, though such decrees as are the result of consultation, or that are looked upon like written laws, to keep by one and to consult, as occasion deserves—though such decrees, I say, cannot justly be ascribed to God : yet that the divine understanding should immediately, perfectly, and in all cases discern between good and evil ; and that the divine will should thereupon determine to choose the one, and refuse the other, seems entirely consistent with the highest perfection, and with our most just and worthy conceptions of the ever-blessed God. Nay, for the divine Being to remain one moment undetermined, concerning the choice of what is good, or the refusal of evil, would argue some imperfection in him, and be inconsistent with our highest, most just, and most exalted notions of him.

“ However, it is evident, that in the popular language of scripture, previous counsels and subsequent decrees are ascribed to the Divine Being—to point out to us the wisdom, and the steadiness of his conduct.

“ The three great effects of divine wisdom and power are creation, providence, and redemption. The universe has been created in all that order and exact harmony ; with all that fitness, relation, and mutual dependence, that it could not have carried more marks of wisdom, if the plan had been ever so long in hand, and the whole and each part modelled with ages of previous study ; and then, the great architect had set about the mighty work, and adjusted it in number, weight, and measure, according to the decrees or proper rules of creation.

termine God ; humour, fickleness and passion, too often influence man. When a man repents, he actually changes his mind. When God is said to repent, there is no change of his mind ; the change is in the creature, who, upon becoming better, is approved ; upon growing worse, is disapproved. For God steadily favours goodness, and as fixedly dislikes wickedness. Upon these accounts repentance and human passions are ascribed unto God.

The same comparison is carried on between God and the human soul, when God is represented as considering before-hand ; consulting ; and after that resolving, or decreeing.

“ The foundation whereof is this—when a man has a work of time and importance before him, he pauses, consults, and contrives ; and when he has laid a plan, resolves or decrees to proceed accordingly. When we have found this in ourselves we are ready to apply it to God also ; and he in condescension has applied it to himself.

“ The works of creation and providence must be allowed to be vast and stupendous ; and therefore we run back and conceive of God as a skilful artificer, or wise governor, deliberating and consulting upon the matter, as laying a plan and then decreeing to proceed according to the counsels of his own will. As if, for a long time before this world was made, or from all eternity, he had been concerting measures both as to the making and governing of it, and then writ down his decree which, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, were never to be altered. Whereas, to take this (of God’s consulting and deliberating before he determined,) in a strict and literal sense, would be the same absurdity, as to ascribe a real human body, and real human passions to the ever-blessed God.

“ It is only in general, a popular representation of his infallible fore-knowledge, and unchangeable wisdom : *i. e.* he in the event does all things as wisely as a man can possibly do, after consulting and surveying a thing on all sides ; and likewise, God as steadily pursues the most proper method as one can do, that has foreseen all possible cases and laid a scheme accordingly. There can nothing new or unforeseen start up and surprise him, so as to put him to any difficulty. He foresees all possible

“ Though we comprehend not the intire system of providence (which is of a large extent, and calculated for many ages) yet we may observe, that the material world is under a very remarkable regulation.

“ And much more must we suppose it of intelligent beings, which are superior in rank and dignity. Our not being able to account for some particulars, should, in modesty and justice, be imputed to our ignorance, rather than to the want of wisdom. and propriety in them.

“ For no man can say, that any thing is improper, which does not plainly appear to imply some absurdity, or contradiction, unless he could enter into the whole scheme, and knew all the ends and designs of each particular.

“ What has been said of providence, may in a great measure be applied to the work of redemption, which without all question, is as wise (and if understood, would appear as wise) as all possible consultations and decrees could have rendered it.

“ The period of innocence does not fall in here ; but from the lapse of our first parents, to the finishing the canon of the New Testament, and the government of the church ever since it was step by step foreseen, and all along conducted with the highest wisdom.

“ The call of Abraham, God’s treatment of that patriarch, choosing Isaac rather than Ishmael, as heir of the great promise made to Abraham and his seed—and Jacob rather than Esau, before the children were born, or had done good or evil ; *i. e.* his bestowing fewer blessings upon the descendents of the one than upon those of the other, (which in Hebrew phrase, is to love the one, and hate the other ;) the prefigurations and predictions of the Messiah, the time and manner of his coming ; his birth, life, doctrine, miracles and sufferings ; his resurrection, ascension, the spread of his doctrine after his departure into heaven, his present dominion, and his returning as judge ; his casting off the unbelieving Jews ; and, together with the believing Jews, taking in the believing Gentiles ; the terms of salvation pitched upon, viz : repentance, faith, and an holy, virtuous life ; and the final adjudging men to rewards or punishments according as their works {have been—are as wise events, and as steadily carried on, as if they had been millions of years in contriving ; and

after that written down among the decrees, and in there-  
cords of heaven, to be punctually regarded and fulfilled  
in their season.

“ But, let us not suppose, that to create, govern, or  
redeem the world, God had any need to study upon it,  
and lay down rules to go by, as the wisest men find oc-  
casion to do, before they engage in matters of moment.

“ A child may be forced to view, first letters, then  
syllables, and then single words, before he can read a  
short sentence. But a man that can read well, takes it  
in at a single glance of the eye. And, as the heavens are  
high above the earth, so God’s thoughts transcend ours,  
infinitely more than the wisest of us surpass unexpe-  
rienced children.

“ He had no more occasion to pause, and deliberate,  
and lay down rules for his own conduct, from all eter-  
nity, than he has now. What! was there any fear of  
his mistaking afterwards, if he had not prepared de-  
crees, and kept such records by him, to consult, upon  
occasion, what he himself was to do? Was he wiser  
before the creation? or, had he then more leisure, that  
he should take that opportunity to settle all his affairs,  
and make rules for himself, from which he was never to  
vary?

“ He has doubtless the same wisdom, power, and all  
other perfections at this day, which he had from all  
eternity, without any addition, diminution, or the least  
alteration, and is now as capable of making decrees, or  
rather has no more occasion for them now than former-  
ly: his understanding being always equally clear and  
bright, and his wisdom infallible and immutable.

“ Upon the whole, this is an allusion or comparison  
to what we find in ourselves; but comparisons must not  
be strained beyond their primary intention. Our Sa-  
viour will come to judgment as a thief in the night, i. e.  
suddenly and surprisingly; but not to rob and murder,  
which yet thieves in the night commonly do.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

VISIT OF THE BELFAST PRESBYTERY TO THE  
KILLINCHY CONGREGATION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—Permit me, through the medium of your useful periodical, to lay before the Christian public, an accurate statement of a few of the sayings and doings of certain Reverend Divines, who, with a great deal of sanctity in their looks, and strong expressions of peace, charity, and good-will, flowing from their lips, go about with the *real design* of flinging the apple of discord into every society, where they find the blessings of peace, harmony, and unanimity to prevail; and of sowing dissension, and stirring up religious strife, and sectarian animosity throughout the land. Whether, by saying so, I misrepresent their object in any manner, or in the least degree go beyond the legitimate bounds of Truth, I leave it to an impartial public, after reading the following statement of *facts*, candidly to decide.

On the 29th of May, an adjourned meeting of the Belfast Presbytery was held in the Rev. Mr. Watson's Meeting-house, Killinchy; the Rev. Dr. Hanna, Moderator. The *object* of the Meeting was to determine what that grave and reverend body should do respecting Mr. Watson, who, as they understood, by witnesses examined by them at the preceding meeting, did not preach what *they* conceived to be the *Gospel*!

When the Congregation had sat in silent and anxious expectation for the space of *one hour* after the usual time of meeting, during which, the Presbytery were assembled in private, Dr. Cooke, followed by the other members, entered the house. Dr. Hanna proceeded to the pulpit, and offered up a long and beautiful prayer to Almighty God, imploring his grace and presence to attend them whilst engaged in—*what*? In what they presumptuously call “doing their duty to the great King and head of the Church;” but what every honest man,—every man of common sense, would call, endeavouring to ruin the comfort and usefulness of a worthy brother minister, and to sow contention and discord throughout a hitherto peaceful and happy neighbourhood.

When the usual routine of calling the roll, and reading the minutes of last meeting, had been gone through;



a number of resolutions, together with a memorial founded upon these, which had been *unanimously* agreed to by the congregation, were presented to the presbytery.

The object of these was to show, that as the people of Killinchy have hitherto enjoyed, without interruption, the blessings of peace and harmony under the ministry of Mr. Watson, they have, therefore, unanimously resolved, "to abide by Mr. Watson *at whatever risk*. Hence, they pray the Presbytery not to adopt any measures, which may trench upon these blessings, or produce, in any way, dissension and discontent amongst them.

This, Sir, you will perceive, was rather a stumbling-block in the way of the Reverend worthies, and no doubt lowered the heat of their clerical zeal, at least by a few degrees; and thereby prevented it from occasioning those sweeping effects, which its strength was at first calculated to produce. The Presbytery had come there under the *pretended*, but *flimsy* pretence of "doing their duty to the head of the church;" which, in plain English, means to raise the cry of heresy against Mr. Watson, and turned the good people of Killinchy against their venerable pastor, because forsooth, he happened to differ in opinion from some of themselves with respect to a certain *mystery*, and had imbibed too much of the spirit of the Gospel, to engage with them in their thorough-paced system of proselytizing. But the people of Killinchy were rather too clear-minded to allow themselves to be caught with chaff. They saw the dust that had been attempted to be thrown into their eyes, and carefully avoided it. Accordingly they came boldly forward, and stated that the Rev. Mr. Watson was a useful and worthy pastor; that they had always enjoyed the blessings of the Gospel under his long ministry,—that they were bound in gratitude, and firmly resolved to adhere to him,—and therefore, cautioned the Presbytery not to take any steps to dissolve the bonds in which they were united. This then, was nearly a death-blow to their hopes. It was an insurmountable barrier placed between them and the object they had in view. It was a complete annihilator of that design they came to effect; *but they were there and something must be done*. Accordingly, their skilful leader, and admirable tactitian, Dr. Cooke, proceeded to relieve them from their difficulty, in doing

which, he showed no little ingenuity. After the memorial had been read, he rose, and spoke to the following effect:

“ Drunk men, he said, had insulted him from the gallery at the last meeting ; but he never thought of confounding one or two foolish individuals with that highly respectable and peaceful congregation. He had been cautioned both by friends and enemies, both by word and letter, against coming there to-day. He had been told, if he would come, he would require to bring a body of Police with him ; but his only *Police* was the *Bible*. [No word of the celebrated Overtures, &c.] He disbelieved these reports. He knew the peaceable inhabitants of Killinchy too well to believe them. He knew they would not disgrace the Presbyterian name, by insulting a Minister of the Gospel. “ We need no Police. We have the Session, the Committee, the Congregation ;—these are our Police. Persecution, my friends, has been used as a catch-word to deceive you ; but it never brooded in the mind of any of this Presbytery. I speak for the honour of this body, and defy any man to point out a single instance, in which this Presbytery ever endeavoured to promote any thing contrary to peace. It is, therefore, our duty to tell our accusers,—to tell them charitably and christianly, that such a charge is unfounded.”

Now Sir, on these assertions of the Doctor's, every mind, in the least acquainted with the history of the Presbyterian church in this country, for the last two or three years, will make its own comment. Whether the Belfast Presbytery, as a body, has ever “endeavoured to promote any thing contrary to peace,” I shall not stop to enquire, but it surely bespoke no common share of audacity in Dr. Cooke, the principal leader in the Clough and Greyabbey affairs, to stand up in the presence of the inhabitants of Killinchy, who well knew the *mild* and *charitable* disposition that he had manifested towards Mr. Watson's two brothers, the worthy ministers of these places ; and in the presence of Mr. Watson himself, to utter assertions which every man and woman in his hearing knew to be diametrically opposed to facts. Well indeed did the Doctor estimate the peaceable temper of the people of Killinchy ; for had they not borne with him beyond all patience, they

would have risen like one man, and cast the vile persecutor of their pastor's brothers, and the insidious plotter against their own happiness, immediately out of their courts. But to proceed with his speech.

"As to the memorial," said the Doctor, "it is temperate and Christian; and this entitles it to our attention and regard. We come here to do a great and important duty in the spirit of peace and charity. We can now proceed in one of two ways—either withdraw and consult in private, or discuss our resolutions in presence of the congregation, and deliberate openly and above-board. But I prefer the latter method; for if we go into secret, it will be thought that there is some under-hand work going forward."

Plain, open, upright, candid, honest man!

Mr. Dill then moved that Dr. Cooke draw up resolutions himself—thinks his address most Christian, and "*will give him his cordial support in whatever measure he may please to adopt.*"

Truly, an honest and open confession, Mr. Dill. You, sir, and some of your brethren have long been accused of acting merely as tools to the Rev. Dr.; and the charge, it seems, has not been ill-founded, for here you have avowed it. Well, to say the least, this was manly.

After a collection had been taken up for the benefit of the sexton, Dr. Cooke rises to read three resolutions. But before doing so he takes occasion to advert again to the calumnies that had been uttered against him and his party, by those who talk of persecution. "His object was not persecution! He detested it! It was most abominable, unchristian, hateful, and hell-begotten." Thank you, Dr. for this admission. It at least gives us some grounds to hope for reformation, to hear you condemn in words what you have hitherto not scrupled to countenance by your works. With respect to the resolutions that he was about to submit to the consideration of the Presbytery, he states that the first refers to the memorial, the second to their accordance with its prayer, and the third to the proper business of the day. The substance of them is as follows:—"First, resolved that these documents, [the resolutions and memorial of congregation,] are entitled to respect from the Presbytery on account of the peaceful and christian spirit which they manifest. Second, resolved, that the Pres-

bytery do accord with the prayer of the memorial, and endeavour to disseminate evangelical truth. Third, as it appeared from the examination of the witnesses on the last day of meeting, that the doctrines of the Trinity and original sin, are not preached by Mr. Watson, resolved, that these form parts of the gospel; when not preached, therefore, the gospel is not preached; and hence we would recommend Mr. Watson to the Divine grace, and direct him to supplicate aid and assistance to enable him to preach the gospel!"

This, Mr. Editor, though not the words, is, I can pledge myself, pretty nearly the substance of the resolutions. And perhaps, they may appear to many at first sight, sufficiently moderate. But let it be remembered, that this was the only course left. The declaration of the congregation contained in the memorial, was a decided bar to any rigorous measures. Nothing therefore remained for the Presbytery but to assume the *appearance* of moderation, and while they amused the people with fair words and goodly speeches, to sow the noxious seeds of religious strife and sectarian animosity within their breasts. That the measures which they adopted, were decidedly calculated to produce this effect must be evident to the common sense of every individual, for what could be the object of this last resolution, unless it were to create a feeling of discontent in the minds of the people against their minister, I am totally at a loss to determine. But, in short, what business had the Belfast Presbytery, or any man, or body of men upon earth, except the congregation, with Mr. Watson's or any minister's belief? A man's religious opinions are matters solely between God and his own conscience, with which no fellow-mortal whatever has any right to interfere. From whom then did Dr. Cooke derive the power of entering into a brother minister's congregation, and declaring by fair words, long speeches, and insidious resolutions, calculated to work upon the prejudices of the people, that he did not preach the gospel of Christ? But hear what excuse the Dr. makes for himself. After reading the foregoing resolutions, he proceeded to state—

"We have a right to express our opinions as well as others; and our office would condemn us if we did not."

No doubt Dr. you have certainly a right to express your opinions, but *where*? Have you a right to express them there, where by so doing, you disturb a brother's comfort, injure his property, and destroy his usefulness? Or what right have you to summon your brother before your tribunal, and question him on account of his conscientious expression of his opinions? Certainly he possesses the same right as you.

On this part of the Dr.'s speech, however, I shall not dwell, as it was ably answered by Mr. Watson himself at the time, who rose and said, that "he hoped that he (Dr. C.) would not entrench on the right of others to express their opinions; and would caution him against the use of so strong language." To this the Dr. replied, "We hold ourselves witnesses to you of the truths of the gospel, but do not set ourselves up as Lords over God's heritage. We therefore stop by recommending Mr. Watson to the God of all grace to direct him. Our spirit is to *pray*, and not to *persecute*!"

On this, sir, I shall make no comment, but merely ask the Rev. Dr. if he ever condescends to look into your pages; "who commissioned him and his brethren to be 'witnesses of the truths of the gospel' to men as well, if not better, versed in its heavenly precepts and doctrines, than he himself can pretend to be?"

I shall not, sir, occupy your pages by detailing the puny attempts which Messrs. McCullough, Dill, and some other gentlemen made to assail the fortress of peace—to rouse the passions of the ignorant and the prejudices of the bigotted, and to cast the brand of contention amongst the peaceful inhabitants of Killinchy. Their endeavours were completely defeated by the firm stand, the manly eloquence, the convincing exposure of their fallacies by Mr. Watson. Their poisoned arrows fell harmless before the impenetrable shield of truth which he opposed to them, or rebounded with double force against themselves. And a simultaneous burst of applause from a large respectable congregation, in favour of their minister, proved at once the inefficacy of their arguments, and the failure of their schemes. Mr. Dill indeed, largely contributed to his own downfall; for he expressly denied in the face of the whole congregation, when charged by Mr. Watson, what he had said not two minutes before. Even Dr. Cooke himself



with all his ingenuity, happened to fall into a gross and palpable contradiction. On one occasion Mr. Dill commenced to talk about his own peaceful and charitable spirit, and the efforts he had made to produce *conciliation*. The Dr. rose and said, "Mr. Dill takes credit to himself for conciliation, but he would ask him were not *they all* for conciliation?" and yet in less than five minutes afterwards, the Dr. started up and said, that he "came for *no such object as conciliation* ; he came to *do his duty*. He was *no liberalist* ; but would serve the king and head of the church.

But, sir, I cannot conclude this account without expressing my admiration of the truly consistent and candid conduct of the Rev. Mr. Wallace. He rose and said, that "he agreed with the resolutions as far as they went, but decidedly objected to stopping with them. The Presbytery have solemnly resolved that the gospel is not preached in Killinchy, why not send persons therefore to preach the gospel? He would not wish to injure Mr. Watson ; but they would not be doing their duty to the king and head of the church without affording the preaching of the gospel." This was not only consistent, but a manly, open, and honest avowal of their intentions to distract the minds of the people. But it seemed to be too candid to suit the Dr.'s designs: for he immediately started up and said, "that it was contrary to the rules of that Presbytery for any member to speak, who was not about to submit a motion to the Presbytery." Indeed ! strange rules !

Mr. Watson also rose to refute some assertion made by Mr. Wallace in the course of his speech ; but the Dr. likewise objected to him speaking on the very same grounds ; because, forsooth, he was not about to submit a motion to the Presbytery, therefore he would not be allowed to defend himself. What? a man accused, submit a motion to Presbytery ! Shame, Dr. ! Is this your charitable spirit, which you lauded so highly? But it seemed that no such law, if any such existed, was in the least binding on the Dr. himself, for before sitting down, he proceeded, and *made a long speech, but no motion whatever followed it*.

These, sir, are a few *facts* for the truth of which I can vouch, which may prove to the Presbyterians of Ulster that the age of priestcraft has not yet passed

away, even in their own land—that the old leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees which loved long prayers in the synagogue, the uppermost rooms at feasts, greetings in the market-place, and to be called of men Rabbi, has descended to some of the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus; and that there are still some who draw near to the gospel in words, and honour it with their lips, while their actions proclaim their hearts to be far from it. I am, &c.

AN OBSERVER.

#### ADDRESS TO THE PRESBYTERIAN LAITY.

GENTLEMEN,—The following address was the production of a Presbyterian Clergyman, now no more! whose name was once conspicuous in the Synod of Ulster—whose pride and glory it was to own himself a member of a body, such as the Synod *then* was: but the late disgraceful proceedings of which, had he lived to witness them, would have drawn from his eyelid the burning tear of disappointment, pity, and sorrow. Disappointment, that the Synod ever descended from the lofty and glorious situation, it once boasted to maintain, and that the society where his earliest and brightest dreams of usefulness and honour, ever centered, should have acted the mean and dastard part which the last few years have witnessed. Pity for the weakness of men, whom he once considered faithful and true to their religion. And sorrow, for the degradation and degeneracy of Presbyterian Ulster.

The following observations were written at a time when a rage after novelty and fashion was carried to an extreme height—when many abandoned the simple institutions of their fathers to follow the multitude, to places where there was greater attraction, by which one of the most ancient and respectable congregations in Ulster was in danger of being deprived of many of its members.

It is but justice, however, to say, that the deserters were, in general, from among the young, giddy and thoughtless, naturally attracted by show and splendour: A few *hoary* heads, who had not, it would seem, altogether laid aside their “vain imaginations,” composed the residue of these, I had almost said *traitors*, to their cause.

With the hope, that a serious perusal of these few lines may have the effect of encouraging *Bible Christians* to stand firm in their simple and truly Christian institutions.—I remain yours most respectfully,—M.

After a little attentive consideration concerning the distinctive principles of Presbyterians, you will perceive, that the form of religion you profess, has strong and peculiar claims to the character of being established on the sure foundation of the *sacred Scriptures*. It behoves you therefore, to give it your decided preference and zealous support.

Some, who are fond of external show in religious matters, may represent your system as too bare of ornament; but its simplicity should be to you a very high recommendation; because, in this respect, it is exactly conformable to the primitive model. The pomp and garniture which have been brought to adorn the temples and worship of some societies of Christians, are relics of Pagan superstition, and were introduced among the corruptions which early overspread the Christian church. In your practice, Christianity appears restored to its original state and form.

Though your system has not the honour of being the religion of the state, nor of being surrounded by the glare of earthly magnificence, yet it strongly recommends itself to your respect and esteem, from the virtues and talents of those who early professed it; for these reflect upon it a higher lustre than any which it can derive from the relics and honours of this world. Though it were utterly despised by the generality of mankind, it would notwithstanding be venerable on account of its intrinsic excellence.

Hold fast, therefore, that inheritance which you have received from your fathers—an inheritance, which those of a former age most highly valued, and in many instances, purchased with their blood, or retained with the spoiling of their goods, and many personal sufferings and privations. Beware of considering it a matter of indifference, whether or no you support, or withdraw your countenance from such a system. Its peculiarities are of high importance to the honour of Christianity, and the rational liberty of the human mind. So long as you are persuaded of its excellence, you cannot consistently embrace any other religious profession;

for, not only is religion in general a matter of the highest moment; but, a rational, consistent, and conscientious profession of that system of divine truth, which has been communicated to us by the Son of God, is expected and required from all his followers. We are commanded to “search the Scriptures”—to “prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good.”

Let not a spirit of indifference to such important concerns occupy your minds. Make it a matter of *conscience*, to serve God with enlightened understandings and uncorrupted sincerity; nor be of the unhappy number of those who countenance religion and its forms, merely as it appears to suit their worldly views and propensities. Well to this purpose does Mr. Towgood observe:—“I think that, from the nature and intention of public worship, it cannot be indifferent to me, in a moral and religious view, whether the doctrines and the spirit of the church to which I give my public countenance be conformable to the doctrines and spirit of Christianity or not. When I attend the public worship of God, I ought to consider myself, in all the devotional parts of the service, as engaged in a solemn address to the Supreme Being, under those characters, and as possessed of those perfections, which reason and revelation have, in *my own best judgment* ascribed to him: and by my attending any particular church in preference to others, it is virtually declaring, that the professed, the peculiar principles of that church are such as I now, such as I wish to support, as far as my personal attendance and example will do it.”

Call no man on earth *Master* in religious matters; knowing that one is your master, even Christ, and that ye are all brethren. Even the apostles were not lords over the faith of the first Christians; they were only helpers of their joy. Much less does it become other Christians to arrogate dominion over the consciences of their brethren.

Make the BIBLE the rule of your faith and practice. Human compositions may be useful to assist you in your religious inquiries; but in every sea of doubt and uncertainty, let the *Bible* be your guiding star—the Bible which alone is able to make you wise into salvation.

Under a strong sense of the infinite value of divine *truth*, be not backward in giving your countenance and

aid to the societies which have been formed for disseminating the Holy Scriptures. Men of narrow and illiberal views may discourage the Bible institutions; but, under a conviction that the word of God is powerful to overthrow priestcraft, superstition, and antichristian errors, let it be *your* ambition to extend its influence more and more every day. In proportion as the Sun of righteousness shall spread abroad his beams, will the shades of spiritual darkness, with which mankind have been long oppressed, be dispelled from off the face of the earth.

Firmly grounded in the principles of your profession, be cautious how you give ear to the solicitations of *enthusiasts*, who may be desirous for their own interested purposes, of withdrawing you from the Societies to which you belong. Nothing but the most satisfactory and conclusive evidence should induce you to abandon a profession so highly respectable and excellent, as that in which you have been educated: and this evidence you may well despair to find in the foolish harangues of *canting hypocrites, and ignorant enthusiasts*.

While you are so far countenanced by the government, as to enjoy the privilege of holding separate assemblies for religious worship, and of publicly maintaining and defending your own peculiar principles, be not presumptuous; but let a spirit of Christian moderation regulate your whole conduct. Entertain the most perfect liberality and good-will to those of other denominations, who, no doubt, are as sincere in their religious profession, as yourselves. If you should be reviled by the ignorant, the foolish, and unprincipled, and denounced as aliens from the grace of God, and as excluded from his mercies—follow not their example. The sneers and insults of such persons are deserving only of your contempt.

Above all things, be careful, that while you maintain and profess the peculiar principles of Presbyterianism with firmness and zeal, the fruits of your holiness shall be manifest in your whole conduct. Without this, the excellence of your profession will be of no avail, to save you from the displeasure of your final Judge.

“Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”



“Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

## Intelligence.

### CHRISTIAN TRACT SOCIETY.

THE Twenty-third Annual Meeting of this Society was held at the Worship-Street Chapel on Thursday, May the 10th, on which occasion the Rev. James Yates was called to the chair.

The Report was then read: it stated that *seven* of the *old* Tracts had been reprinted, and *three new* ones printed, namely, *The Effects of a Bad Temper*, displayed in the *History of Rebecca Price*; *Friendly Suggestions to the Labouring Classes*; and *Adherence to Truth recommended*: it also stated that the Committee had not yet been able to make any use of the Tracts received from Amsterdam; and it then proceeded as follows:

“In the course of the last twelve months there have been issued from the store nearly *twenty thousand* tracts. Of these an unusually large number has been presented to Societies, or to individuals who requested to be furnished with them, or to whom the Committee presumed that they would prove acceptable. Donations of tracts have been made to friends residing at Brighton, Ipswich, Newbury, Trowbridge, Cradley, Loughborough, Sunderland, and Deptford; also to the General Baptist Congregation, Trinity-Place, Borough; and to the Worship-street Sunday-school; to the Rev. R. K. Philp, for the use of the City Mission; to the Author of *Rebecca Price*; to Mr. Cook, a worthy artisan, who has just emigrated to Canada; to Mr. Thomson, a gentleman residing in the Island of St. Thomas, in the West Indies; to Mr. Hellyer, a man of an inquiring mind, and an excellent spirit, in Hobart’s Town, Van Dieman’s Land; to Count Lasteyrie, President of a Society for Popular Instruction, at Paris; to Mr. Hume, the Member for Middlesex, who has shown his approbation of the tracts by becoming an annual subscriber; and lastly, to the Trustees of the British Museum, one of the Collectors for which institution, had expressed a wish that a set might be placed in the National Library. To one of these donations the Committee advert with much pleasure, namely, that to the Rev. R. K. Philp, City Missionary. The catholic spirit of the undertaking which this gentleman has been appointed to execute, is so congenial with the leading principle of this Society, as to render this grant peculiarly appropriate.

While your Committee trust that these donations will be taken as some proof that they have not been inactive, they are confident that you will rejoice with them in the contemplation of the moral and spiritual good which your Society is effecting in many and distant parts of the world. Believing that your publications set forth

the pure morality and the divine consolations of the Gospel, in a style which is well fitted to engage the attention, they are anxious to disseminate them as widely as possible ; they are always happy in having any new quarters pointed out to them, in which their introduction would be desirable ; and they feel encouraged in their labours by the many assurances which have reached them, that your tracts have proved both interesting and edifying to those in whose hands they have been placed.

Adhering to the professed object of the Society, which is, to exhibit the morality apart from the disputed doctrines of the Bible, your Committee have carefully revised each of the old tracts, which have been sent again to the press, and have scrupulously excluded every thing, which has been inadvertently admitted, not strictly in unison with the leading principle just adverted to. They conceive that a society conducted on this principle, is eminently fitted to disarm opposition, and highly deserving of support from all who wish well to their species. They believe that the excellent moral precepts, and the perfect example of Jesus, the views of God's fatherly and merciful character, which he so clearly revealed, and the exalted hopes which he held forth to those who truly believe in him, need only to be presented in a clear and interesting form, in order to become a most efficacious means of correcting the prevailing vices of mankind, and of extending on earth that kingdom of God, which is founded in truth and righteousness, and which is the source of peace and joy to all who can be accounted its subjects. They call upon those who think with them, to aid in the work which they have undertaken ; and they conclude by fervently commending your institution to the protection and blessing of that great Being, without whom no labour can prosper, but who will ever look with an eye of mercy and of favour on those who strive to reclaim the wandering from the paths of sin, and to establish their feet in those ways of wisdom and of goodness, which are full of comfort and delight, and which lead to the possession of never-ending bliss.

#### SYNOD OF ULSTER.

IF we had time and space we could spend both in making some remarks on the present meeting of this body, which has contrived to occupy so large a share of public notice for some years back, but seems destined now to sink again into its former obscurity.

There seems to have been something like an attempt at reviving former feuds. We are told that the case of the Rev. W. S. M'Cleane of Newtonhamilton was discussed for several hours. "It appeared that a charge of unfair dealing in regard to a money transaction, had been preferred by an inhabitant of Newtonhamilton, named John M'Shane, against the Rev. person alluded to—that the Armagh Presbytery had investigated the charge, and pronounced a sentence of suspension *sine die* against Mr. M'Cleane—that pending the proceedings he had withdrawn from the Synod and attached himself to the Remonstrants, and that legal proceedings had been taken against Mr. Bell the moderator of the Presbytery, for the part which he had officially sustained in the investigation. The result, after a tedious inquiry was, that the Synod confirmed the sentence of the Presbytery, and the Remonstrants were severely censured by several

speakers, for receiving an application that had been made to them under circumstances so extraordinary as those referred to."

We know, and can assure our readers that the statement given in the Synod was totally incorrect; but we do not intend to give at present the true account of the transaction—this we shall leave in the hands of the Remonstrant Synod, who will meet in less than a fortnight, to whom the Remonstrant Presbytery of Armagh have referred the case (for as yet the *Synod* knows nothing of the business,) and of whose proceedings we shall be able to give some account in our next number.

The debate on the adoption of the Westminster Confession, as the creed of the Synod, was a very remarkable one. We may observe, *en passant*, that we were very much amused by Mr. Brown's statement, that what had *particularly impressed* him with a notion that the enemies to creeds were *practising an imposition on the world* was, that a youth had once come to Mr. Brown's country from Belfast, whom he had found to be insidiously employed in learning a Catechism that had been drawn up by Mr. Montgomery. What a sensation must have been produced in the Synod by this powerful exposure of the imposture practised by all the opponents of creeds! But lamentable to relate, the Rev. Samuel Dill, has utterly demolished the Westminster Confession of Faith. There were numerous errors about which it was totally silent—the Gaerloch heresy—the Irving Heresy, and various forms of "Antichristianism." He has discovered that the Divines who drew it up had not long emerged from darkness, and could not have had so comprehensive a view of Divine truth, as to supersede all future discoveries. He then descended to more specific objections, and has, at length, found out that it is impossible to understand the phrase *Eternal Generation*--that if it had any meaning at all, it implied the idea of *derivation of being*, and that this was downright heresy, or at least an infinitely dangerous idea.

But we must hasten to the conclusion—we have not seen the result of the debate accurately stated, but we believe it to be to this effect: that subscription to the Westminster Confession be optional—that any candidate for license objecting, may state his objections to the Presbytery, and that they may refer them to the Synod, to be sustained or not as they see fit.

This, then, is what they have come to after years of turmoil, confusion, alienation of feeling, feuds and persecution. For many years the Westminster Confession was their nominal standard. By the Code of Discipline subscription was made voluntary, and an option given to explain their views, so as to satisfy the Presbytery. Then came the celebrated Overtures, by which some of their most worthy and valuable men were driven out of their body, and forced to form themselves into a distinct Synod. Now, when all this has been effected, and the Synod has come under the dictation of a domineering few, they have, by the advice of this very faction, come back to the original plan of their Code of Discipline. We cannot trust ourselves to make even a commencement of remarks on these facts—but they speak for themselves. The unanimity, too, produced by the excommunicating influence of the Overtures, is most edifying—no two of this expurgated body, agreeing on almost any point of importance in Theology.

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

No. VII.

AUGUST, 1832.

VOL. III.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—The attention excited by the proposed Marriage Bill has reminded me of some facts which I noted as they passed: they appeared at the time to be important in reference to our privileges, and are now, I think, worthy to be recorded, and preserved from falling into total oblivion. I therefore request a place for them in your periodical.

*Chichester-street,*

WILLIAM BRUCE.

PRESBYTERIAN MARRIAGES IN IRELAND.

THE plantation of Ulster consisted partly of Episcopalians and Puritans from England, but chiefly of Scottish Presbyterians. These came over in numerous bodies, attended or conducted by their ministers. In consequence of the wars with Tyrone, the churches were generally deserted, and the livings vacant. The ministers, were, therefore, received gladly by the bishops, and many of them were inducted into the vacant benefices, and invested with the tithes, and all the other privileges of the Episcopal clergy. The bishops not only dispensed with the provisions of law, but with their own peculiar prerogatives, consenting to recognize the validity of Presbyterian orders, and even to co-operate with Presbyterians in conferring ordination on licensed preachers. This is true of at least two of their number—Echlin, bishop of Down, and Knox, of Raphoe. By the liberality of those prelates, their pulpits were immediately filled with a body of able, zealous, and diligent ministers, who exercised all their functions according to the Presbyterian model; for such was the antipathy of the Scotch at that time to prelacy, that their services could not be had on any other terms.

Thus the Presbyterian ministers began the practice of solemnizing matrimony between their parishioners, whether Episcopalian or Presbyterian, promiscuously. This practice has now continued without interruption,

as far as I know, for two hundred and twenty years, excepting some vexatious interference of the bishops' courts in the reign of Queen Anne.

This may also be said of the Presbyterians in Leinster and Munster, who have uniformly exercised the same privilege. A retrospective disturbance of this principle would shake the titles of the nobility and gentry of this Province to their estates, as well as involve minor proprietors in endless litigation.

A prospective alteration would produce similar effects though in a less degree, in time to come, notwithstanding any penalties or legislative enactments that may be devised.

The proceedings of the ecclesiastical courts were checked by 11. Geo. II. c. 10. S. 4. To wit:—"Whereas, several Protestants, dissenting from the church of Ireland, as by law established, scrupling to be married according to the form of matrimony prescribed by the said church, do therefore frequently enter into matrimonial contracts in their own congregations, before their ministers or teachers, and thereupon live together as husband and wife: be it enacted, that for the ease of such Protestant Dissenters who have already entered, or shall hereafter enter, into such matrimonial contracts, and thereupon live together as husband and wife, that they shall not be prosecuted, in any ecclesiastical court in this kingdom, *ex officio mero*, or on the presentment of any minister or church wardens, of any parish, for or by reason of their entering into such matrimonial contracts, or for their living together as husband and wife, by virtue of such contract; provided, such Protestant Dissenters, and such ministers or preacher, have or shall take the oaths, and subscribe the declaration, according to a statute made in the sixth year of the reign of King George the first, entitled, an act for exempting the Protestant Dissenters of this kingdom, from certain penalties to which they are now subject." This is the Irish toleration act.

In England also, the marriages of Dissenters celebrated in the face of their own congregations, in the interim between the act of toleration of King William III. and the English marriage act, 26. Geo. II. appear to have been considered valid in the courts of law. (*See Hutchinson and Wife, v. Brooksbank.* 376



—*Wegmor's case Solkeld*, 438.) In the latter case, Lord C. J. Holt's opinion, is thus reported—"By the canon law a contract *per verba de praesenti* is a marriage, as, *I take you to be my wife*. So it is of a contract *per verba de futuro*, viz. *I will take*, &c. If the contract be executed, and he does take her, it is a marriage, and they cannot punish for fornication, but only for not solemnizing the marriage according to the forms prescribed by law, but not so as to declare the marriage void." The marriages of Quakers stand at the present day, entirely on this footing; no direct sanction being given them by the marriage act, but merely an exemption from its operation, leaving their marriages to stand, as all non-conformist marriages then did, upon the old law. The Jews also were exempted; but both parties must be of the same denomination, whether Quakers or Jews. Other Dissenters had gradually acquiesced; on account of attempts to disturb their marriages in the ecclesiastical courts. (*See Haydon v. Gould Solkeld*, 119.) *Statement furnished to members of Parliament by the Association of Dissenters petitioning for relief from the marriage act, in 1820.* Catholic marriages have, I suppose, never been questioned—in England they are married a second time according to law.

About April, 1782, Mr. Stewart, of Killymoon, introduced into the Irish House of Commons, a bill declaring the law on the validity of Dissenting marriages; but so many objections were made, that it was withdrawn. A second was introduced by Mr. A. Caldwell, which became a law, (21. Geo. III. c. xxv.) notwithstanding a protest; soon after some of the bishops represented to Mr. Caldwell, that the act was too general, and that some restrictions should be enacted, which they were satisfied, should come from the Dissenters. A supplemental bill was accordingly drawn by Counselor Dunn, but was too late to be transmitted that session. In April, 1785, Dr. Hastings, vicar general of Dublin, brought forward another bill; but it gave general dissatisfaction to the Dissenters, and was dropped.

The Dissenters' Marriage Act, (21. Geo. III. 25.) was made for the purpose of *removing any doubts that may have arisen concerning the validity, of marriages entered into between Protestant Dissenters, and solemnized by Protestant Dissenting ministers; and it is declared and*

*enacted, that all such marriages shall be good and valid to all intents and purposes whatsoever, and the parties shall be entitled to all rights and benefits whatever, as if the same had been solemnized by a clergyman of the Church of Ireland.*

During these proceedings, Dr. Campbell, and other judicious northern Dissenters were dissatisfied that Parliament should interfere, which, I believe, occasioned Mr. Dunn's bill to be dropped.

By 32. Geo. III. c. 21, it is made lawful for Protestants and Roman Catholics to intermarry; and for Dissenting ministers to publish banns between such persons; but not for *Popish priests or Dissenting ministers to celebrate marriage between Protestants of the Established Church and Roman Catholics.*

The following is the substance of a case submitted to Dr. Duigenan, in 1804, with his answer:—In June, 1797, R. Lathropp, aged seventeen, was married to A. Marshall, a Protestant Dissenter, aged thirty, by R. Black, Presbyterian minister of Derry, to which congregation A. Marshall belonged, and which Lathropp had attended several times, and continued to attend after marriage. No banns were published, nor license obtained; nor was there any consent of the parents, &c. of the man. The marriage was celebrated at noon-day, in the house of the father of the bride. The parties lived together at Derry for some time, and acknowledged each other as man and wife, and had issue one child. He has since written to her as her husband, and no suit has been commenced to set aside the marriage.

Dr. Duigenan's opinion, omitting superfluous words: "I am of opinion, that the marriage is good. The English marriage act has no effect in Ireland." He then states the Dissenters marriage act, 21. 22. Geo. III. 25—"Lathropp at the time of the marriage attended the meeting-house as a Dissenter, and afterwards; and as there is no prescript form for changing from the established religion to that of the Dissenters, the attendance in a Dissenting meeting-house for a serious of time, for the purpose of attending divine service, is in my opinion, a sufficient evidence of the person so attending, being, during that time a Protestant Dissenter; and as A. Marshall was at the same time a Dissenter, I

am of opinion, that the marriage was a valid marriage." He then states, that he had examined the acts referred to in the proviso of the Dissenters act, and did not find "that any of them affected this marriage; though such marriage, if celebrated in England, would be void; yet as it is valid by the law of Ireland, the courts in England will judge it to be valid: for the validity of marriage is to be decided upon per legem loci, where it was celebrated. (See the case of Compton and Bearcroft, decided in the Arches Court by Sir G. Hay, Feb. 1767, affirmed by the delegates in 1769.)"

Lathropp afterwards married C. Clarke, and then courted a lady in Liverpool; but her friends, hearing of his conduct, wrote to Dr. Black. His answer not only disconcerted Lathropp's projects in that quarter, but came to the ears of Miss Clarke, who employed a solicitor to annul the second marriage; but when the libel was laid before her, and she was told, that she must sign her maiden name, she refused with indignation. He was, however, at last tried for bigamy at the Old Bailey, in 1814.

On the trial Dr. Black admitted, that the prisoner was not a member of his congregation, nor, he believed, of his church; that there was no registry kept by him, nor certificate given or asked for. The recorder, among other things, said—"that the young man had gone into another country, conformed to the religion of the place, and married the young woman; and therefore he, the recorder, was bound to consider the marriage as legal. The onus lay on the prisoner to show, that he was not a Dissenter. He attended the Dissenters' place of worship in Ireland; and his being seen there was *prima facie* evidence, that he belonged to that persuasion."

Mr. Alley produced the certificate of the prisoner's birth, which was in 1780.

The jury found him guilty.—The sentence produced a debate in the House of Commons, April 10, 1815, when the Solicitor General said—"That in his (Sir S. Shepherd's,) opinion, and that of the Attorney General, (Sir W. Garrow,) after having examined every act of Parliament in Ireland, respecting the validity of the marriage ceremony, the first marriage of the petitioner was a legal one. He could state also, that some years

ago, certain very eminent civilians in that country were consulted, all of whom declared, that it was a legal one, and that no ecclesiastical court in Ireland would venture to set it aside. The question, which the learned judge who tried the case, had promised to reserve for the opinion of the judges, was not as to the validity of the first marriage; but whether under the act of Parliament a single witness who was present at the marriage, together with the registry of it, were sufficient to establish its having taken place. Upon that point, however, he had no doubts; and he then referred to a case, in which Lord Mansfield had decided, in opposition to Sir W. Blackstone, that the registry of a marriage alone was sufficient evidence to prove the marriage."

About this time Mr. Abernethy, Presbyterian minister of Templepatrick, had been degraded by his own church for irregular marriages, but still persisted in the practice. Mr. Bristow, Vicar of Belfast, applied to Dr. Duigenan, and the following is an extract from his answer.

"I do not know what to advise you to do respecting your Dissenting couple-beggar. If the two parties are Dissenters, you cannot punish them. The act of the 21. and 22. of Geo. III. exempts them from prosecution: and if the parties married were not Dissenters, the couple-beggar cannot be punished by any prosecutor in the courts of law, though such a pretended marriage is a mere nullity. You may, indeed, cause him to be prosecuted in the Consistorial Court of your diocese for celebrating, or rather pretending to celebrate a marriage, *if either of the parties so named are not Dissenters*, and articles may be exhibited against him in such suit: but you can sentence him to nothing but ecclesiastical punishment, such as penances by standing in a white sheet, reading an acknowledgment of his crime, &c.; all which, he will, I believe, but little regard. As any marriage celebrated by this fellow, except, between Dissenters, is in itself an absolute nullity, I think, you had better let him alone. The damage he may do to Dissenters by such marriages is of their own seeking, under the act of the 21. and 22. of his Majesty, and ought to be no concern of ours."

By 32. Geo. III. c. 21. s. 12. It is made lawful for Protestants and Roman Catholics to intermarry, and for arch-bishops, bishops, and all having lawful jurisdiction to grant licenses for marriages between Protestant and Roman Catholic; and for clergymen of Established Church, or Protestant Dissenting ministers, to publish banns between each; and clergymen of Established Church, or other Protestant minister duly celebrating such marriages, are not to be liable to any pains, penalty or censure, any law notwithstanding.

Sect. 13. Nothing herein shall authorize Protestant Dissenting Ministers or Popish Priests to celebrate marriage between Protestants of Established Church and Roman Catholics.

To these facts and documents I shall subjoin some particulars relative to the practice of the several Presbyterian bodies in Ireland. I have, all my life, been intimately acquainted with the Synod of Munster, including the Dissenters of that Province and Leinster, and am confident, that no impropriety has ever taken place in that body with respect to matrimony. With the practice of the Seceding and Covenanting Synods, I am not so well acquainted; but have never heard any suspicion cast on the purity of their practice. With respect to the General Synod of Ulster, which has under its care a great majority of the people in the North, I am furnished with the most authentic materials. To some of these I shall now refer, and shall prefix a letter which I received from that learned and accomplished Divine, who was, of all others, best informed as to the history and principles of the Synod,—Dr. Campbell, of Armagh.

*Armagh, April 27th, 1785.*

Dear Sir,—I thank you for your attention in giving me an account of the Bill for regulating Marriages. The first information I had of it was from Mr. Stewart of Tyrone, in a letter of the 14th, and next post he was so kind to send me a copy of the Bill, and ask my sentiments of it; which I wrote him at great length. The Bill was prepared by Dr. Hastings, Vicar General of Dublin, who showed it to Mr. Stewart; and told him that his wish and intention was, to put the clergy of the Established Church, and Dissenters, exactly on the same footing with respect to marriages. How much, then,



was I surprised on reading the Bill, to find the reverse in every clause. Our people, in all the cases mentioned in the Bill, may be married by their Ministers; but their people, may not, in any case, be married by our Ministers: and we are prohibited also from marrying our own hearers, without three publications of banns; but the asking of banns may be dispensed with by the Bishop's courts.

I have shown the Bill to a number of our friends; they are all of opinion that the Bill is designed, solely, for the purpose of bringing money into the Bishop's courts, and increasing the fees for granting Licences. And, no doubt, it is well devised for this purpose, and for increasing the number of Clandestine Marriages, instead of preventing them, as the title declares—because by rendering regular marriages more expensive, or the forms troublesome and disagreeable, the common people will run in greater number than ever, to those worthless men, who make a traffic of marrying all that apply. People of a certain rank will attend to the legality of their marriages—the lower people trouble not their heads about such Acts of Parliament. The intermarriages between Protestants and Papists are, I suppose as common as formerly, before the Act passed to make them void, and yet that Act is severe against the officiating clergyman. This Bill don't reach ministers that may solemnize Clandestine Marriages—it respects the customs of Quakers, and of Roman Catholics; it would only alter ours, and take away our ancient privileges.

So far as my knowledge reaches, I have not heard of any thing in the conduct of our Ministers to give any colour of pretence for the present Bill. Clandestine Marriages are not celebrated among us. I know not one instance of such marriage charged against any of our brethren. In many places they marry without publishing banns; but that does not render these marriages clandestine, more than marriages in the Established Church by licence. And, I am persuaded, that our regulations for marriages, supported by our discipline, are better calculated to secure the peace of families, and to prevent improper and irregular marriages, than any laws that can be devised to regulate marriages in the Established Church, where their discipline is so imperfect.

The ancient rule of the General Synod is, that the parties shall be proclaimed three several Sabbaths, and in case of Vacancy, in the next Congregation that is *planted*. In the year 1712, it is ordered, that the Marriage banns be published three several days of public worship; whereof two, at least, shall be Lord's days. And if any person of our communion shall presume to marry, *i. e.* to be married, without the consent of *Parents*, or those who are in the place of parents, except in such cases as parents' refusal, shall be judged unreasonable—the persons so offending

1. If Minister, shall be suspended six months.
2. If Probationer, twelve months.
3. If Ruling Elder or Deacon, suspended during pleasure of the Session.
4. If any other, shall be cited to appear before the Session, confess his fault, and be admonished.

It is, also, the Rule of Synod, that no Minister shall *refuse* to marry our people in an *orderly* way.

When Marriage is to be solemnized without asking of banns, which corresponds to marrying by licence, in the Established Church; which, however, all our Ministers do not go into, the Rule is—first, to have the consent of Parents, or of those who are in the place of Parents; and next, the testimony of two or more Elders or Deacons, or of two or more reputable Members of the Congregation, who have a competent knowledge of the parties, their families, their characters and connexions, and then the voluntary oath of the parties that they know of no impediment why they may not lawfully be joined together in marriage. By these Regulations, you will observe how much the parental authority is supported—the opinion of the vicinage inquired into and respected, and the peace of families, and the good order of our congregations, secured.

Children having arrived to a certain age, are not permitted, with us, to dispose of themselves in marriage, in disobedience to the authority of their parents, or those who are in the place of such parents. If such children persist in demanding marriage, the matter must be brought before the Minister and Session, the parties heard, and judgment given according to circumstances. And from this judgment an Appeal lies to the Presbytery, and from thence to the Synod.

Need it be observed, that these Regulations effectually provide against Clandestine Marriages—that our people have so great an interest in enforcing them, and so great power in all our Church Judicatories, that our Ministers could not, if they were inclined, break these rules, and escape the discipline of our Church.

The Established Church has provided no such effectual remedy against such of their Clergy as are guilty of a breach of duty in this particular: and for that reason several of them have been most shamefully guilty, and have held their benefices during life, notwithstanding.

If this Bill passes, it will occasion great discontent and ill-humour: it will be considered as an insult upon us, unprovoked, and doing an injury to the great body of Presbyterians in the kingdom, to gratify the avarice or the ambition of a few interested men. Such interference of our Legislature to establish forms by Law, in what concerns our Ministerial office, is contrary to our known principles, and to the privileges handed down to us for a long succession of years. The case is altogether new, and, so far as I know the history of our Church, never before attempted, or thought of. Religion and its concerns, are not the proper subject of Legislation, any further than to support every one in the free exercise of his religious profession, and to prevent any one under the pretence of Religion, to disturb the peace of the state. It may be said, that marriage is a civil contract, and therefore properly within the civil jurisdiction. I know some think it purely civil—others ecclesiastical, and others mixed. This is a question involved in disputation, and need not be gone into. The question before us is plain and obvious, and may be considered as a matter of fact. Marriages have been solemnized by Presbyterian Ministers, in this kingdom, according to their own Rules, for near two hundred years. No inconvenience has attended this custom. The people are much pleased with it, and attached to it. Why, then, should it be altered, when it can answer no valuable purpose, but, on the contrary, is introducing a much worse mode in its stead, and rendering the form of solemnizing marriage more troublesome and expensive. Whereas marriage ought to be free from any clog or

hindrance, should be encouraged in every well-regulated government, and the forms be neither absurd, nor troublesome, nor expensive.

If this Bill was intended to answer any other purpose than what is alleged above, it is very imperfectly framed, and liable to great exceptions, but the more imperfect it is in every other respect, it will secure the main end the better, that is, the fees for Licences.

You ask me of the practice of Seceders; but I know nothing particular in their practice, nor do I know of any complaints against it. There is generally one of their Ministers in Dublin, from whom you might get any information you want.

I hope our friends in Dublin will make all the interest they can to oppose this very obnoxious Bill. If you see it in the same point of view that I do, don't you think our brethren in Dublin should petition the House against it? We can do nothing in the North without a general meeting, and I apprehend there will not be time for that, if our our Moderator should think of calling the General Synod. When anything occurs I shall be glad to hear from you. Make my most affectionate compliments to the Brethren, and believe me to be,

Dear Sir,

Very sincerely, yours

WILL. CAMPBELL.

I forgot to observe, that it sometimes happens, that our Ministers are asked to marry, when one of the parties only is of our people, the other of the Established Church. This is usually done in consequence of a letter from the Minister or Curate, or a Certificate, in which also the Church Wardens join. But, if the Established Clergy have refused such certificate in any instance, (which, however, I don't know,) and yet a Dissenting Minister, at the request of the families and reputable neighbours, should solemnize the marriage, the question is, whether this can be called, in any sense, a Clandestine Marriage; or whether the peace of families is disturbed by it? No one will pretend to say so. Nor can any good reason be given, that I know, why in such intermarriage, the Minister of one of the parties may not officiate as well as the Minister of the other; and why that may not very safely be left to the option of the parties.

Some of our gentlemen here are very much struck at observing that the Roman Catholics and the Quakers, are put under no restrictions by this Bill, but their usages left untouched. Not that they disapprove of this, but that they think it very unfair and unjust, that so great a body of Protestants, who deserve so well of the Government should be so highly injured, and so particularly pointed at; who, if any distinction was to be made, think it ought to be to their advantage.

In a letter dated March 27th, 1800, he contrasts the practice of the Synod with that want of discipline in the Episcopal Church, which has always been lamented by her most eminent prelates, and highest authorities. "The Established Church," says he, "has no discipline, and therefore their laws for solemnizing marriage are insignificant. Publishing banns with them gives no 'notoriety beforehand,' as in the case of one of our Princes and Lady A. Murray. Taking out licence gives no notoriety, nor any security for the peace of families, against the most offensive marriages. I remember an instance of a young woman who eloped with her brother-in-law, and married by licence: another, of a man marrying his niece; and there was not the least reason to think that any blame attached either to the Register, or the Clergyman to whom such licence was directed. Their laws are in fault, and give room for imposition: there is only an oath in the way, and how cheap these are, is seen every day. I knew a family near Armagh, where the man married two sisters by licence."

The Remonstrant Synod retain the Synodical Code, and the character of the Presbytery of Antrim has ever been unimpeachable. A review of the printed Rules of the General Synod, extracted from the Minutes from 1694, is a satisfactory proof that that body has never been chargeable with laxity of discipline, or undue lenity to offending members, and the Code of Discipline demonstrates that they still retain the same character.

Though banns have been discontinued, as furnishing an occasion for clandestine marriages, and consequent desertion of religious duties, notoriety, and consent of relations, are fully provided for. Certificates from the Ministers or Session of any Congregation to which one of the parties may belong, are strictly required. A



regular registry is to be kept and submitted to Presbytery, and Marriage Lines given to the parties. The penalties for irregularity, are Admonition, Suspension, Silencing, and Degradation; and no marriage by a silenced or degraded Minister is recognized.

As this compilation was first made without any partial view, so it is now sent forth unattended with any comment.

---

Cork, March 14th, 1852.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL READINGS.—No. VI.

---

Genesis, Chap. ii. Verse 3.—“ *God therefore blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that on it he rested from all his work which God in creating had made.*”

This day God pronounced happy or prosperous: the “good” creation was a cause of “blessing” or declaring happiness and joy. Humble though we be it has been given us to conceive the *Benevolent* pronouncing that blessedness or happiness should be perceived and acknowledged. To illustrate this meaning of the word “blessing” see its usage in Deut. xv. 4. “*The Lord shall greatly bless thee in the land;*” and again in the same book, chap. xxx. verse 16, “Keep his commandments .....that thou mayest live and multiply, and the Lord thy God shall *bless* thee, &c.” Some persons in former days, had the power bestowed on them of expressing the will of God respecting the future happiness, or unhappy circumstances of individuals, or even of nations; several of the patriarchs were gifted with this prophetic power; and when in the course of our examination, we meet with instances, they will afford us an opportunity of investigating certain claims to the power of pronouncing cursing and blessing, which clergy and *creed-makers*, even in Protestant churches, have set up, and latterly have pushed into most vigorous practice.—“*Sanctified it.*” Sanctification means simply the setting apart for, or dedication to, religious purposes. The perfection of such a place of felicity as this earth, deserved a commemorative day; and while the creation of man was the great event which the human race had to exult in, the Sabbath had every right to be kept as a holy-day; such was the state of the

Hebrews; but the new creation to righteousness, and the declaration of a higher and more prolonged life by our Saviour, demands of us Christians, a commemorative day, and the day chosen is that on which our Saviour's work was finished by his resurrection, the first day of the week, not the seventh. The sanctification of the seventh day by man, is not explicitly noticed until the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and a declaration by God of a thing to be,—though not immediately,—in the form of the present tense is not unusual in Scripture. We have several cases of sanctification in holy writ,—“the first born in Israel were sanctified;” while yet infants they were set apart for the duties which, when genealogy was important, they had to sustain. The first-born animals were sanctified, and this could have been no moral change or state. The mind and body of man may be sanctified, separated from vice or ignorance, and we find inanimate things constantly sanctified by cleansing, or by separating them from common purposes. Fields and possessions were sanctified; Aaron and his sons were sanctified, as were also the vessels of the temple. Most Christians have agreed to set apart the first day of the week for sacred purposes, and have made it a sanctified day. The sect called Sabbatarians, however, do not think themselves freed from the original Hebrew Sabbath, consequently they sanctify both the seventh day and the anniversary of our Lord's resurrection. To our imperfect knowledge it would seem a source of great happiness, if an institution of such high and invaluable expediency as the Lord's day, which gives to many a seventh part of their time for religious duties, and acquiring religious knowledge, stood on more explicit grounds of command than it now does in the Christian Scriptures. Many enquiring and pious Christians, who take the New Testament to be the Christian's guide in faith and practice, find that the chief sanction for Sunday being kept holy, is those general instructions given to attend to prayer and the reading of Scripture. As to a specially appointed time, the common inferential reasoning, “that all men are commanded to devote a seventh part of their time to sacred duties, because the Jews were commanded to keep holy the Sabbath day,” appears to me quite unsatisfactory. Are Christians also bound to keep the

Sabbath of weeks, the Jubilee, or the Sabbaths of years? No such reasoning has been advanced, yet they have no special abrogation beyond the other Levitical observances, nor has the Jewish Sabbath been entailed on us by any re-enactment under the Christian dispensation. If we are generally discharged from Hebrew forms, how, without a re-institution, can we be bound by the Jewish Sabbath days? Those who would impose this burthen on themselves and fellow-Christians, must beware, lest in exalting the Jewish Sabbath day on the Christian's Lord's day, they make themselves debtors to the whole law: see Gal. v. 3. But indeed the inferential Judaizing Christians, do not at all keep the Jewish Sabbath. They alter both the day and the hours of that observance, without the least Scriptural authority:—see Levit. xxiii. 32, “From evening until evening shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.” “The seventh day is the Sabbath, &c.” The Jewish Sabbath was held conformably, from 6 o'clock Friday evening, until 6 o'clock Saturday evening; that is, during all Friday night, and Saturday until 6 o'clock in the evening. Surely this period is not the exact representative of the hours commonly kept as the Lord's day among us, nor can its connection with the hours between 12 o'clock Saturday night, and 12 o'clock Sunday night, be shown; consequently it would be wiser to found the propriety and necessity of Christians setting apart the Lord's day from secular duties, or common and usual pleasures, on the great and manifest expediency of such a course of proceeding, supported by the authenticated practices of the primitive Christians. We have but few texts in the Christian Scriptures which can be fairly construed into commands to sanctify the Lord's day in the manner which experience proves most to secure the beneficial results it affords society. In “the new and living way” the disciples are exhorted, “not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some was.” Heb. x. 25. Prayer, praise, and reading the law, were duties to which the early disciples adhered firmly; and one of the most likely means of punctuality in these improving duties, was the appropriation of a particular and successive portion of time thereto. That stated periodical times were thus appropriated, and that the first day of the week was

the sanctified time, the following among many considerations, indicate :—on the first day of the week our Saviour appeared to his disciples for the first time after his resurrection; see John, xx. 19.; and in verse 26 of the same chapter, we find that *after eight days*, that is, on the first day of the week following, “*again*” the disciples were with him. The custom seems to have been followed by the Disciples even on their travels, and at a distance from Jerusalem. See Acts xx. 7. “And upon the *first day of the week* when the Disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, and continued his speech until midnight.” This appears to have occurred at one of those concerted associations mentioned in Acts ii. 46, where it is stated, that the Disciples continued breaking bread from house to house, conformably with the declaration of verse 42, “And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.”

The assembling of the Christians at Corinth, is directed to be similar to the manner already practised in the Churches of Galatia, (see 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.) and works of charity, or rather a collection for the Apostle, was dictated by himself to be made on that day; “On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by a store, &c. that there be no gathering when I come.” The separation of the Lord’s day by name, and most probably to religious uses, appears very early to have been an established practice among Christians; see Rev. i. 10, “I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day.” It is quite needless to go into the expediency of the institution of a day of rest, which invites the affluent, “and those who are at ease in their possessions,” to spend some hours in the week considering what they are, and what they ought to be; and which on one day lessening the adventitious and fictitious differences between man and man, places the most exalted if he will, where he may compare himself with others his inferiors, yet perhaps his betters; and bids him look and see on earth, what heaven may yet show, that in virtue God is no respecter of persons. But to the laborious portion of mankind, Sunday brings, or ought to bring, physical as well as moral improvement; a relaxation is pretty generally conceded to them, which even the beasts that perish ought to enjoy under considerate owners. Even to



those whose severe labour precludes from the elevation and wholesomeness of occasional relaxation in the week, Sunday generally brings change of clothing, cleanliness of person, and often the advantage of some religious instruction. The working man is on that day lent to his family, and may freely indulge his family feelings, those which keep the heart warm and soft, ready to receive the impress of the other virtues, and which the hardening pressure of unremitted labour would obliterate and destroy. Sunday, then, is a day of rest, of religious and moral education; a day to develope and keep alive the humanities and charities of life, and to encounter by the powerful influence of a well employed seventh of our time, the callosity, insensibility, and other unworthinesses, which tend to encrust and harden our hearts and souls during the other six. These are strong sanctions from expediency in favour of a Lord's day well spent; and he who would by precept or example, entrench on the sanctity of such an invaluable institution, would add to the ignorance and dissoluteness of the poor, by giving unconstrained opportunity for the exercise of selfishness and oppression, by many of those who are rich in this world's goods. We find the strict observance of a day of rest and religious occupation, recorded of all the ancients of Christianity, in which practices an immense majority of modern Christians occur; and though we should avoid Judaizing the Lord's day, should we not watchfully protect its valued hours from secularization? The cares and usual pleasures of life absorb plenty of most men's time; and he who once abstracts any part from that free-will offering made to God and the good of his fellow-men, will be in danger of stealing hour after hour from the altar of his devotion, until at length the Sunday will return with little advantage to him: he will not urge others to reproach his neglect by their attention; nay, he may finally lead his neighbour to sanction his folly, by similar foolishness. Even such an example is pernicious. We can try to induce men to follow us in what is good, and are accountable when we do not so; but if, by our bad example, we lead a weak brother to cast away one of the means of knowing the laws of God, and the best interest of man, are we not involving ourselves in accountability for all the evil he may



ignorantly do. These remarks apply to the Lord's day, but the *Sabbath* seems to have been a covenant of the Jews only: see Exodus, xxxi. 16, "Wherefore the *Children of Israel* shall keep the Sabbath for a perpetual covenant throughout *their* generations." But let us Christians consecrate our Lord's day to works of piety, of instruction, of charity; thus commemorating that benevolent Saviour, who said, that it was lawful to do good even on the Jewish Sabbath day. (see Mat. xii. 12.) Much interesting and curious information on this subject may be found in Rees's Cyclopædia, articles "Sunday," and "Sabbath;" we have also seen that the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Whately, has been attacked in Parliament, for a pamphlet of his said to be in support of the Lord's day, independent of the attributed origin from the Jewish Sabbath. This pamphlet I have not seen, but from its having been vehemently stigmatized by the party called "Saints;" and as Dr. Whately is called a Socinian, a Neologist, &c. &c., it is probable that his book is both Scriptural and rational. It is said that it has been charged with some *tax* from which religious pamphlets are usually exempted, on the ground that it is an irreligious production; if these statements be true, the Archbishop's book must have some claim on public attention, a merit not common among the productions of these lofty Ecclesiastics, "*the Cardinals of the English Popery.*"

Chap. II. verses 4, 5. "*This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth; when Jehovah's God made the heavens and the earth and every plant of the field which had not yet been on the earth, and every herb of the field which had not yet grown; for Jehovah's God had not caused rain to fall upon the earth, nor was there a man to till the ground. But there went up a flood from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.*" By this statement it seems that plants were created full grown; they were not watered by rains as seedlings generally are, but when created with perfect vigour, they were irrigated or inundated, which in their advanced stage would produce an exceedingly rich vegetation. A second reason given for the plants having been created before they had been in the earth, or for not being the progeny of others, is, that there was not a man to till the ground. Moses here intimates that a power

different from that of man originated vegetable life, for man at its origin was not in existence. "*And Jehovah formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living person.*" The formation of man out of dust has given origin to a fine lesson of humility; "dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return," has been practically before mankind, when other teachings have been slighted; here mortality it is pointed out to man, but certainly the material chosen by God for our construction, no more debases our nature, than does our Saviour's using clay and spittle for opening a blind man's eyes, degrade the miracle which God empowered him to perform. "*Breath of life:*"—the wonderful dependance of life on breathing as far as relates to warm blooded animals, is accurately here expressed; many of the reptiles continue during long suspended breathing to live, but to man the atmospheric air is "the breath of life," which God causes to act on him with animating power. Man is moulded out of clay by the fingers of Jehovah, and then vivified by the agency of air, the life-promoting creative of the Almighty. "Man," says the authorized version of the Scriptures, "became a living soul;" some persons attach a meaning to these words different from what the best Biblical scholars think they convey. Soul, implies life in its most numerous usages, and the supposition that the gift of immortality is here indicated, results from our application of subsequent knowledge to precedent expression, and was not so understood by the writer of Genesis. In Genesis, i. 20, the moving creature is said to have a *soul* or life, see the marginal reading of the authorised version. The same word is repeated in verse 30, where beasts, fowls, and creeping things are spoken of, all have *souls* such as the author of Genesis expresses that man has. In Leviticus, xvii. 11, we are told "that the life (soul) of the flesh is in the blood," which blood is given on the altar to make atonement for the soul (life). This refers to the previous verse where the cutting off from the people, or death of the body, is denounced. This chapter of Leviticus has *soul* several times employed to express life. The word soul has other meanings in Scripture, and in the New Testament probably applies to the mind or immortal part, as we have a distinction made where both "*soul*"

and "*body*" are spoken of: in Judges, xviii. 25, "*soul*," seems to mean inclination or disposition—" *Lest fellows of bitter soul run upon thee*;" but the most general employment of the word is to represent the whole man, the life (soul), the most important part properly standing for the entire being. Man's immortality or future existence was not then taught, when it was said that man became a living soul. Some theo-metaphysicians have, in an overwhelming love of Triads, invented three principles in man; and Mr. Mason in his book on self-knowledge has repeated this theory; but just as well might a cabalistic septeniad or noniad of principles be alleged; as it will appear on a little examination that nature, reason, and scripture, give as much colour and support to one as another; indeed the conclusion that triads abound in revelation, which some persons think an argument, would be found much deficient, the septeniads are more frequent, and sacred, as we see that number applied to the sanctification of days, of weeks, of years; and the distinguishing of candlesticks in the temple, &c. Can there appear any great difficulty in believing the fact as stated, that when God conferred life on the model of man, it was but the employment of means, (the usual course of Providence,) even taking the passage literally, and without any latitude; but this statement does not by any means preclude or negative the unrecited part of man's composition; the Almighty has chosen, to confer on him a higher degree of reason, and a diminished portion of instinct, than on any other animal; he also has chosen graciously to extend the existence and happiness of this last created being, into a new and higher kind of life; his renewal is declared immortal and our Saviour was the prophet who first gave us the *sure and certain* hope of this extension of being. As to the question "whether matter can be immortal," it does not appear to be a profitable inquiry, and the supporters of a doctrine of a future life, sometimes needlessly embarrass the argument for the great truth, by attaching to its support vague and questionable speculations. Man dies and is called into life again, we are told God will give him a boy as it pleases him after the resurrection; and can man limit the Creator's power, or forbid him to confer immortality on a glorified or exalted human body. This discussion about the necessary imma-

terialty of spiritual substances, seems to consist of mere words without ideas; what is an immaterial substance? substantiality and non-entity are the ideas which metaphysicians try to enwave with one another, so that non-entity shall spiritualize substance, and substance give a body to nonentity, sufficiently strong to be made into a spirit. These doctrines do not make any man wiser or better; it is true that corruption cannot inherit incorruption, but after our death is removed, our sleep over, we are told our dying, mortal, or corruptible bodies, shall be changed into bodies which shall die no more. What does St. Paul say about three natures? not a word, he states that our inferior will be exalted into a superior nature, a new endowment is to be given, and man is to become a celestial instead of a terrestrial being. If enquiry shall disembarass the great truth of the Christian revelation, the resurrection, from irrelevant theories, some good shall be attained. If perhaps also, on reflection it may appear, that the nature of our immortal bodies does not affect the fact of our immortality; neither does the question whether the soul sleeps, interfere with our being awake in the glories of a future life hereafter. If analogy were a fair argument, well known instances might be given of perfect inertness being succeeded by vivacity. All hybernating animals appear devoid of consciousness and sensibility, yet they revive and live. The caterpillar lives a lowly life for a period, feeds itself into a still lower state of existence, reposes in that form, and at length bursts his "cearments," and comes forth a beautiful and vivacious butterfly. But higher grades of existences are sustained by their necessary reposes, man sleeps unconscious, and if his soul, as theorists say, does not sleep, it must be idly employed, as no account is had of its lucubrations, except from the half slumbers of a few dreamers. We do not want a system of opposite and conflicting natures in man; neither need we exalt one part of the same creature by the vilification of another; the whole man is the work of God's hands, he thought worthy, and pronounced good. St. Paul beautifully figures our death and resurrection: what life is there in a grain of wheat? yet what a beautiful, animated, and useful production is the plant which springs from it. May we not go to a higher example. Did not our glorious Forerunner,



our Saviour himself, undergo a change which prefigures ours? He was dead and was alive again, and though his body saw not corruption, yet it was changed—not to an impassable imagination, but to a body which, though fitted for a heavenly existence, could be perceived by common means, could be handled and known by his followers. The servant is not greater than his lord, and shall man in his pride seek a nature different or higher than the glorified body which our Saviour bore to heaven. May we continue in humble hope of, and exertion to secure future happiness to that immortal existence to which God shall give a body as it pleaseth him, when the form of the first man, Adam, who was verily declared “a living soul” shall be exalted by our partaking of the quickening spirit.—I am &c.

A LEARNING TEACHER.

[No. V. of *Sunday-School Readings*, has fallen aside for the present, but if found it shall be inserted.—For the speculations of the Author we are in no way accountable.—EDITORS.]

### TRINITARIAN SYLLOGISMS.

[FROM THE CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR.]

It is a favourite argument of Trinitarians, to infer the Deity of Jesus Christ, from similar forms of expression being applied to him, in some instances, as are applied to God.

Thus, God is called “a rock of offence.” Isa. viii. 14. And Jesus Christ is called “a rock of offence.” 1 Peter ii. 8. Therefore Jesus Christ is God.

Again, God is called a “Saviour.” Isa. xliii. 2. And Jesus Christ is called a “Saviour.” 2 Peter iii. 18. Therefore Jesus Christ is God.

The force of this mode of argument in support of Trinitarianism, will be seen from the following instances of the syllogistical form.

1. In Gen. i. 24, *God* is said to visit the children of Israel. But in Acts vii. 22, 23, *Moses* is said to visit them. Therefore Moses is God.

2. In Gen. i. 24, *God* is said to bring the Israelites out of Egypt. But in Exod. xxxii. 7, *Moses* is said to bring them out. Therefore Moses is God.



3. In Deut. xiv. 2, The Israelites are said to be the people of *God*. But in Deut. ix. 12, they are said to be the people of *Moses*. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

4. In Deut. vii. 18, 19, The wonders and signs done in Egypt, are said to be done with a mighty hand by *God*. But in Deut. xxxiv. 10, 11, 12, these very wonders and signs are said to be done with a mighty hand by *Moses*. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

5. In Levit. xxv. 55, the children of Israel are said to be the servants of *God*. But in Num. xxxi. 48, 49, they are said to be the servants of *Moses*. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

6. In Deut. viii. 2, and xxxii. 12, the *Lord alone* is said to have led the Israelites forty years in the wilderness. But in Deut. xxix. 2—5, *Moses* is said to have led them forty years in the wilderness. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

7. In Luke ii. 23, 24, 39, the law is spoken of as the law of the *Lord*. But in the 22d verse of the same chapter, it is spoken of as the law of *Moses*. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

8. In Deut. xxxii. 19, 20, 21, *God* is said to move the Israelites to jealousy with those which are not a people. But in Rom. x. 19, *Moses* is said to provoke them to jealousy by them that are no people. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

9. In Num. xiv. 26, 27, the Israelites are said to murmur against the *Lord*. But in the 2d verse of the same chapter, they are said to murmur against *Moses*. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

10. In Psal. lxxviii. 19, 20, it is said that *God* smote the rock, and the waters gushed out. But in Num. xx. 3, 11, it is said that *Moses* smote the rock. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

11. In Exod. xx. 1, 12, we are informed that it was *God* who said honour thy father and thy mother. But in Mark vii. 10, we are told that it was *Moses* who said honour thy father and thy mother. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

12. In Deut. xxx. 7, 8, the *Lord* is said to go with Joshua. But in the 22, 23 verses of the same chapter, *Moses* is said to go with him. Therefore *Moses* is *God*.

13. In Isa. lxxv. 1, it is *God* that says, I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that

sought me not. But in Rom. x. 20, it is *Esaias* that says, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. Therefore *Esaias* is God.

14. In 1 John iii. 20, it is said that *God* knoweth all things. But in 1 John ii. 20, it is said that *Christians* know all things. Therefore Christians must be Gods.

15. It is contended, that Jesus Christ must be God because in Jer. xxiii. 6, it is said, "and this is the name whereby he shall be called, *the Lord our righteousness.*" But in Jer. xxxiii. 16, it is said of *Jerusalem*, "and this is the name wherewith *she* shall be called, *the Lord our righteousness.*" Therefore Jerusalem must be God.

Thus, Moses is God, *Esaias* is God, Christians are Gods, and Jerusalem is God.

Such is the argument by which the Trinitarian system is attempted to be supported! Such the argument triumphantly advanced by almost every individual advocate of the Trinitarian cause!

And if we do not bow to it, we are men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, deniers of the Lord that bought us, and without doubt shall perish everlastingly! How truly may it be said of Trinitarians, "they know not what they do." For could persons maintain such an argument, and act in such a manner, if they were not under strong delusion? May the time soon arrive, when the truth as it is in Jesus shall enlighten their minds!

---

## OBJECTIONS TO UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY CONSIDERED.

BY W. E. CHANNING, D. D.

(Continued from page 143.)

---

2. I proceed to another objection, and one which probably weighs more with multitudes than any other. It is this, that our doctrine respecting Christ takes from the sinner the only ground of hope. It is said by our opponents, "We and all men are sinners by our nature, and infinitely guilty before God. The sword of divine justice hangs over us, and hell opens beneath us, and where shall we find refuge but in an infinite Saviour? We want an infinite atonement; and, in depriving us

of this, you rob us of our hope, you tear from the Scriptures the only doctrine which meets our wants. We may burn our Bibles, if your interpretation be true, for our case is desperate; we are lost for ever." In such warm and wild language, altogether unwarranted by Scripture, yet exceedingly fitted to work on common and terror stricken minds, our doctrine is constantly assailed.

Now to this declamation, for such we esteem it, we oppose one plain request. Show us, we say, a single passage in the Bible, in which we are told that the sin of man is infinite, and needs an infinite atonement. We find not one. Not even a whisper of this doctrine comes to us from the sacred writers. Let us stop a moment and weigh this doctrine. It teaches us that man, although created by God a frail, erring, and imperfect being, and even created with an irresistible propensity to sin, is yet regarded by his Creator as an infinite offender, meriting infinite punishment for his earliest transgressions; and that he is doomed to endless torment, unless an infinite Saviour appear for his rescue! How can any one, we ask, charge on our benevolent and righteous Parent such a government of his creatures. We maintain that man is not created in a condition which makes an infinite atonement necessary; nor do we believe that any creature can fall into a condition, from which God may not deliver him without this rigid expedient. Surely, if an infinite satisfaction to justice were indispensable to our salvation, if God took on him human nature for the very purpose of offering it, and if this fact constitute the peculiar glory, the life and essence, and the saving efficacy of the gospel, we must find it expressed clearly, definitely, in at least one passage in the Bible. But not one, we repeat it, can be found there.—We maintain farther, that this doctrine of God becoming a victim and sacrifice for his own rebellious subjects, is as irrational as it is unscriptural. We have always supposed that atonement, if necessary, was to be made *to*, not *by*, the sovereign who has been offended; and we cannot conceive a more unlikely method of vindicating his authority, than that he himself should bear the punishment which is due to transgressors of his laws.—We have another objection. If an infinite atonement be necessary, and if, consequently, none

but God can make it, we see not but that God must become a sufferer, must take upon himself our pain and and woe,—a thought from which a pious mind shrinks with horror. To escape this difficulty, we are told that Christ suffered as man not as God; but if man only suffered, if only a human and finite mind suffered, if Christ, as God, was perfectly happy on the cross, and bore only a short and limited pain in his human nature, where, we ask, was the infinite atonement? Where is the boasted hope which this is said to give to the sinner?

The objection that there is no hope for the sinner unless Christ be the Infinite God, amazes us. Surely if we have a Father in heaven, of infinite goodness and power, we need no other infinite person to save us. The common doctrine disparages and dishonours the only true God, our Father, as if, without the help of a second and a third divinity, equal to himself, he could not restore his frail creature, man. We have not the courage of our brethren. With the Scriptures in our hands, with the solemn attestations which they contain to the divine unity, and to Christ's dependence, we dare not give to the God and Father of Jesus, an equal or rival in the glory of originating our redemption, or of accomplishing it by underived and infinite power.—Are we asked, as we sometimes are, what is our hope, if Christ be not the supreme God? We answer, it is the boundless and almighty goodness of his Father and our Father; a goodness which cannot require an infinite atonement for the sins of a frail and limited creature. God's essential and unchangeable mercy, not Christ's infinity, is the scriptural foundation of a sinner's hope. In the Scriptures, our heavenly Father is always represented as the sole original, spring, and first cause of our salvation; and let no one presume to divide his glory with another. That Jesus came to save us, we owe entirely to the Father's benevolent appointment. That Jesus is perfectly adequate to the work of our salvation, is to be believed, not because he himself is the supreme God, but because the supreme and unerring God selected, commissioned, and empowered him for this office. That his death is an important means of our salvation, we gratefully acknowledge; but ascribe its efficacy to the merciful disposition of God towards the

human race. To build the hope of pardon on the independent and infinite sufficiency of Jesus Christ, is to build on an unscriptural and false foundation ; for Jesus teaches us, that of himself he can do nothing, that all power is given to him by his Father, and that he is a proper object of trust, because he came not of himself, or to do his own will, but because the Father sent him. We indeed lean on Christ, but it is because he is "a corner-stone chosen by God, and laid by God in Zion." God's forgiving love, declared to mankind by Jesus Christ, and exercised through him, is the foundation of hope to the penitent, on which we primarily rest, and a firmer the universe cannot furnish us.

3. We now proceed to another objection. We are charged with expecting to be saved by works, and not by grace. This charge may be easily despatched, and a more groundless one cannot easily be imagined. We indeed attach great importance to Christian works. or Christian obedience, believing that a practice or life, conformed to the precepts and example of Jesus, is the great end for which faith in him is required, and is the great condition on which everlasting life is bestowed. We are accustomed to speak highly of the virtues and improvements of a true Christian, rejecting with abhorrence the idea, that they are no better than the outward Jewish righteousness, which the prophet called "filthy rags ;" and maintaining with the apostle, that they are, "in the sight of God, of great price." We believe that holiness or virtue is the very image of God in the human soul, a ray of his brightness, the best gift which he communicates to his creatures, the highest benefit which Christ came to confer, the only important and lasting distinction between man and man. Still we always and earnestly maintain, that no human virtue, no human obedience, can give a legal claim, a right by merit, to the life and immortality brought to light by Christ. We see and mourn over the deficiencies, broken resolutions, and mixed motives of the best men. We always affirm that God's grace, benignity, free kindness, is needed by the most advanced Christians, and that to this alone we owe the promise in the Gospel, of full remission, and everlasting happiness to the penitent. None speak of mercy more constantly than we. One of our distinctions is, that we magnify this lovely attri-



bute of the Deity. So accustomed are we to insist on the infinity of God's grace and mercy, that our adversaries often charge us with forgetting his justice; and yet is it objected to us, that, renouncing grace, we appeal to justice, and build our hope on the abundance of our merit!

4. We now proceed to another objection often urged against our views, or rather against those who preach them; and it is this, that we preach morality. To meet this objection we beg to know what is intended by morality. Are we to understand by it what it properly signifies, our whole duty, however made known to us, whether by nature or revelation? Does it mean the whole extent of those obligations which belong to us as moral beings? Does it mean that "sober, righteous, godly life," which our moral governor has prescribed to us by his Son, as the great preparation for heaven? If this be morality, we cheerfully plead guilty to the charge of preaching it, and of labouring chiefly and constantly to enforce it; and believing, as we do, that all the doctrines, precepts, threatnings, and promises of the gospel, are revealed for no other end than to make men moral, in this true and generous sense, we hope to continue to merit this reproach.

We fear, however, that this is not the meaning of the morality which is said to be the burden of our preaching. Some, at least, who thus reproach us, mean, that we are accustomed to enjoin only a worldly and social morality, consisting in common honesty, common kindness, and freedom from gross vices; neglecting to inculcate inward purity, devotion, heavenly-mindedness, and love to Jesus Christ. We hope that the persons who thus accuse us, speak from rumour, and have never heard our instructions for themselves, for the charge is false; and no one who ever sat under our ministry can urge it, without branding himself a slanderer. The first and great commandment which is to love God supremely, is recognised and enforced habitually in our preaching; and our obligations to Jesus Christ, the friend who died for us, are urged, we hope, not wholly without tenderness and effect.

It is but justice, however, to observe of many, that when they reproach us with moral preaching, they do not mean that we teach only outward decencies, but

that we do not inculcate certain favourite doctrines, which are to them the very marrow and richness of the gospel. When such persons hear a sermon, be the subject what it may, which is not seasoned with recognitions of the Trinity, total depravity, and similar articles of faith, they call it moral. According to this strange and unwarrantable use of the term, we rejoice to say that we are "moral preachers;" and it comforts us that we have for our pattern, "him who spake as never man spake," and who, in his longest discourse, has dropped not a word about a Trinity, or inborn corruption, or special and electing grace; and still more, we seriously doubt whether our preaching could with propriety be called moral, did we urge these doctrines, especially the two last; for however warmly they may be defended by honest men, they seem to us to border on immorality: that is, to dishonour God, to weaken the sense of responsibility, to break the spirit, and to loosen the restraints on guilty passion.

5. Another objection urged against us is, that our system does not produce as much zeal, seriousness and piety, as other views of religion. This objection it is difficult to repel, except by language which will seem to be a boasting of ourselves. When expressed in plain language, it amounts to this—"We Trinitarians and Calvinists, are better and more pious than you Unitarians; and, consequently, our system is more Scriptural than yours." Now, assertions of this kind do not strike us as very modest and humble, and we believe that truth does not require us to defend it by setting up our piety above that of our neighbours. This, however, we would say, that if our zeal and devotion are faint, the fault is our own, not that of our doctrine. We are sure that our views of the Supreme Being are incomparably more affecting and attractive than those which we oppose. It is the great excellence of our system, that it exalts God, vindicates his paternal attributes, and appeals powerfully to the ingenuous principles of love, gratitude, and veneration; and when we compare it with the doctrines which are spread around us, we feel that of all men we are most inexcusable if a filial piety do not spring up and grow strong in our hearts.

Perhaps it may not be difficult to suggest some causes for the charge, that our views do not favour seriousness

and zeal. One reason probably is, that we interpret with much rigour those precepts of Christ which forbid ostentation, and enjoin modesty and retirement in devotion. We dread a showy religion. We are disgusted with pretensions to superior sanctity, that stale and vulgar way of building up a sect. We believe that true religion speaks in actions more than in words, and manifests itself chiefly in the common temper and life; in giving up the passions to God's authority, in inflexible uprightness and truth, in active and modest charity, in candid judgment, and in patience under trials and injuries. We think it no part of piety to publish its fervours, but prefer a delicacy in regard to these secrets of the soul; and hence, to those persons who think religion is to be worn conspicuously and spoken of passionately, we may seem cold and dead, when, perhaps, were the heart uncovered, it might be seen to be "alive to God," as truly as their own.

Again, it is one of our principles, flowing necessarily from our views of God, that religion is cheerful; that where its natural tendency is not obstructed by false theology, or a melancholy temperament, it opens the heart to every pure and innocent pleasure. We do not think that piety disfigures its face, or wraps itself in a funeral pall as its appropriate garb. Now, too many conceive of religion as something gloomy, and never to be named but with an altered tone and countenance; and where they miss these imagined signs of piety, they can hardly believe that a sense of God dwells in the heart.

Another cause of the error in question we believe to be this. Our religious system excludes, or at least does not favour, those overwhelming terrors and transports which many think essential to piety. We do not believe in shaking and disordering men's understandings by excessive fear, as a preparation for supernatural grace and immediate conversion. This we regard as a dreadful corruption and degradation of religion. Religion, we believe, is a gradual and rational work, beginning sometimes in sudden impressions, but confirmed by reflection, growing by the regular use of Christian means, and advancing silently to perfection. Now, because we specify no time when we were overpowered and created anew by irresistible impulse; because we relate no agonies of despair succeeded by miraculous

light and joy, we are thought by some to be strangers to piety—how reasonably, let the judicious determine.

Once more ;—we are thought to want zeal, because our principles forbid us to use many methods for spreading them, which are common with other Christians. Whilst we value highly our peculiar views, and look to them for the best fruits of piety, we still consider ourselves as bound to think charitably of those who doubt or deny them ; and with this conviction, we cannot enforce them with that vehemence, positiveness, and style of menace, which constitute much of the zeal of certain denominations ; and we freely confess that we would on no account exchange our charity for their zeal ; and we trust that the time is near, when he who holds what he deems truth, with lenity and forbearance, will be accounted more pious than he who compasseth sea and land to make proselytes to his sect, and “shuts the gates of mercy” on all who will not bow their understandings to his creed. We fear that in these remarks we may have been unconsciously betrayed into a self-exalting spirit. Nothing could have drawn them from us, but the fact, that a very common method of opposing our sentiments is, to decry the piety of those who adopt them. After all, we mean not to deny our great deficiencies. We have nothing to boast before God, although the cause of truth forbids us to submit to the censoriousness of our brethren.

6. Another objection to our views is, that they lead to a rejection of revelation. Unitarianism has been called ‘a half-way house to infidelity.’ Now, to this objection we need not oppose general reasonings. We will state a plain fact. It is this.—A large proportion of the most able and illustrious defenders of the truth of Christianity have been Unitarians ; and our religion has received from them, to say the least, as important service in its conflicts with infidelity, as from any class of Christians whatever. From the long catalogue of advocates of Christianity among Unitarians, we can select now but a few ; but these few are a host. The name of John Locke is familiar to every scholar. He rendered distinguished service to the philosophy of the human mind ; nor is this his highest praise. His writings on government and toleration contributed more than those of any other individual to the diffusion of

free and generous sentiments through Europe and America; and perhaps Bishop Watson was not guilty of great exaggeration when he said, 'This great man has done more for the establishment of pure Christianity than any author I am acquainted with.' He was a laborious and successful student of the Scriptures. His works on the 'Epistles of Paul,' and on the 'Reasonableness of Christianity,' formed an era in sacred literature; and he has the honour of having shed a new and bright light on the darkest parts of the New Testament and in general on the Christian system. Now Locke, be it remembered, was a Unitarian.—We pass to another intellectual prodigy—to Newton, a name which every man of learning pronounces with reverence; for it reminds him of faculties so exalted above those of ordinary men, that they seem designed to help our conceptions of superior orders of being. This great man, who gained by intuition what others reap from laborious research, after exploring the laws of the universe, turned for light and hope to the Bible; and although his theological works cannot be compared with Locke's, yet in his illustrations of the prophecies, and of Scripture chronology, and in his criticisms on two doubtful passages,\* which are among the chief supports of the doctrine of the Trinity, he is considered as having rendered valuable service to the Christian cause. Newton too, was a Unitarian.—We are not accustomed to boast of men, or to prop our faith by great names, for Christ, and he only, is our master; but it is with pleasure that we find in our ranks the most gifted, sagacious, and exalted minds: and we cannot but smile, when we sometimes hear from men and women of very limited culture, and with no advantages for enlarged inquiry, reproachful and contemptuous remarks on a doctrine which the vast intelligence of Locke and Newton, after much study of the Scriptures, and in opposition to a prejudiced and intolerant age, received as the truth of God. It is proper to state that doubts have lately been raised as to the religious opinions of Locke and Newton, and for a very obvious reason. In these times of growing light, their names have been found too useful to the Unitarian cause.

---

\* 1 John v. 7.—1 Tim. iii. 16.



rian cause. But the long and general belief of the Unitarianism of these illustrious men, can hardly be accounted for but by admitting the fact, and we know of no serious attempts to set aside the proofs on which this belief is founded.

*(To be continued.)*

---

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

---

DEAR Sir,—In some of my late letters I gave it to be understood as my intention, so soon as I should have finished my review of Mr. Bagot's work, to furnish a short statement of the Scripture doctrine of the unity of God, as contradistinguished from the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity. Pursuant to that intention, I have a considerable portion of materials prepared upon the subject. But various considerations have induced me to postpone, for the present, the fulfillment of my design.

In the first place, my time and attention are just now occupied, and likely to be, with other concerns. In the next place, I begin to think that a series of letters, following each other at the distance of a month, is not the best or most efficient way of bringing such a subject before the public mind. And in the third place, I am aware that a great variety of short but excellent treatises, having the same general object in view, are in progress of getting into the hands of the community—better than which, or equal to some of which, I am not so presumptuous as to think any production of mine might be. But, what has especially withheld me from the present prosecution of my object is, the having had an opportunity of carefully perusing a small work lately published, entitled “John Milton's last thoughts on the Trinity,” extracted from his larger posthumous work, “A treatise on Christian doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone.” In the little tract to which I refer, I find all that I had intended to do, and more, already done to my hand—done according to a somewhat different arrangement from that which I had contemplated; but done by the hand of a master, incomparably beyond any thing which I might hope to

accomplish. Milton's defence and illustration of Unitarian Christianity have contributed to give me clearer and more decided views of some things connected with this most interesting and important subject.—It has afforded me much strength and comfort to find that his views of Scripture doctrine, in reference to the strict personal unity of God, and the subordination of the Son to the Father, are precisely those which I, and many in common with me, have long entertained. And as every Christian is naturally anxious and should be so, to disseminate what he sincerely believes to be the “truth as it is in Jesus,” I beg to turn the attention of the Christian public upon that little work of Milton's: in the hope and persuasion that it may be as satisfactorily convincing to other minds, as it has been to mine: nor do I know any book, after the Bible, which, upon the subject of the Divine Unity, I should more earnestly recommend to the serious perusal of all your readers. It is the production of a great and good mind, known to have been equally distinguished by genius, learning, and piety; and thoroughly imbued with the true spirit of Christian liberty. It makes a plain and ample appeal to the only authority on such a question—the authority of Holy Scripture. The question is treated, throughout, with a gravity and a strength becoming the subject, and the writer: and although there are some portions of the treatise addressed more immediately to the learned, and accordingly may not be level to the comprehension of others; yet the greater part of it will be found sufficiently intelligible to all; and I shall be altogether disappointed, if it should fail of bringing full conviction to the mind of every candid and intelligent reader of the Holy Scriptures.

But, whilst I thus content myself, for the present, with commending to public attention, “Milton's last thoughts on the Trinity,” as of much more importance than any thing which I might hope to produce—and as presenting a body of evidence, and a strength of argument, sufficient to meet all that has been, or may be, written on the opposite view: there is another department of the subject on which a few letters might be usefully bestowed. Unitarian sentiments have been much misconceived by one portion of the community; and they have been as grossly misrepresented by another.

An attempt, however feeble, to repel the misrepresentations of the one, and thus, in some measure, to remove the misconceptions of the other, might render some service to the cause of Christian truth and charity. And if you extend your wonted indulgence, I may occasionally trouble you with something under that head. Meantime, Mr. Editor, I am faithfully yours,

JOHN MITCHELL.

---

### CATECHISING OF A HERETIC.

(FROM THE NEW YORK CHRISTIAN ENQUIRER.)

---

A CERTAIN Divine in this city, not long since was suspected of heresy. His brethren in the ministry thought proper to appoint a committee to wait upon him and catechise him. The Committee called upon him at the appointed time, and after the usual salutations on such occasions, they commenced their interrogatories; and after several questions by way of introduction to the main subject, they at length broached the all-important question. "Are you," said the Chairman of the Committee, "a believer in the holy and ever blessed doctrine of the sacred Trinity?" "Indeed brethren," said the shrewd Divine, "before I answer this question either in the affirmative or negative, permit me to enquire what you mean by the doctrine of the sacred trinity? I suppose that the subject is important, and I never think it proper to *play upon words*; if you explain yourselves I will answer you."

"What we mean by the sacred doctrine of the trinity, is the well known doctrine of three persons in one God." "But permit me," said the Divine, "further to inquire, what *ideas* do you attach to the word *person*? You say, the well-known doctrine of three persons in one God, but you are aware that different classes of Christians understand the well-known phrase *three persons in one God*, in very different senses. Explain yourselves, brethren, and I will endeavour to satisfy you on the subject." "Indeed, sir, you must understand that the doctrine of the sacred trinity is a profound *mystery*, it is a doctrine above human reason, it cannot be explained or fully understood." "Well, brethren, if *you* do not

understand your own question, I do not see how you can reasonably expect that *I* should understand it; and I am not prepared to answer any question that I do not understand. Whenever you will put your question in any form to convey intelligent (or distinct,) ideas, I will answer it; and until this is done, I think you would be unreasonable to press an answer. Perhaps I believe what you would call the doctrine of the sacred trinity, and perhaps I do not. This can never be determined till your ideas of the doctrine of the sacred trinity are explained."

The Committee were thunderstruck,—a long pause ensued. At length the Reverend Divine added, "I believe firmly all that the Scriptures say respecting *God, our Heavenly Father*; his Son *Jesus Christ*, our Lord, and the *Holy Spirit*. But as it respects the ten thousand idle and foolish questions that have been invented in the schools, which neither the inventors nor any body else understood, and which only serve to play the fool with the learned, and confound the ignorant; as a minister of Jesus Christ, I have nothing to do with them. It is my business to preach the Gospel, as recorded by the Evangelists, illustrated in the Acts of the Apostles, and explained and enforced in the Epistles. And provided that I and my people understand our Bible, and reduce it to practice, we think that it is quite sufficient for us without any *additions* or *subtractions*."—The conversation here ended, and the Committee retired. S.

[We would recommend the Presbyterians of Comber and Killinchy to open a correspondence with this American Divine, before the next visitation of the Dromore and Belfast Presbyteries. The aged Ministers of these places should at least get a lesson from their friend of New York, who seems to think that he has as good a right to examine his brethren, as they have to examine him. Inquisitors in miniature may grow into dangerous strength if not humbled occasionally, and it is but justice to remind the community that though their teeth are pulled, their nails are only pared.—EDITORS.]

## Intelligence.

### REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD DISTINGUISHED BY THE NAME COVENANTERS.

At the present time, when there is so much discussion respecting civil and religious liberty, and when it is quite evident, that the GENERAL SYNOD OF ULSTER, notwithstanding its pretensions to *uniformity*, is,—as has been not only admitted, but maintained—a “heterogeneous mixture of religious principles,” we feel ourselves called upon to lay before our readers the proceedings of the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD, distinguished by the name *Covenanters*, as reported by the *Belfast News Letter*. Whether Mr. Houston or Mr. Paul is supporting the genuine principles of the Covenanters, we shall not venture to say; but it is quite evident that they are directly opposed to each other on a great and important question. Mr. Bates may dread the danger to be apprehended from the discussion of the question, and may state that there are three or four matters of more importance than the one respecting the power of the civil magistrate; but still we cannot imagine any matter of more importance than to know, whether the civil magistrate has authority to punish a heretic as well as a thief or a murderer. This is a life and death question, and is all-important to society.

Mr. Paul charges Mr. Houston for maintaining in the *Covenanter*,—“*That the laws—the judicial laws—against heresy and idolatry, are no more repealed than those against robbery and murder—that the civil magistrate is to use his authority as well in punishing of a heretic or an idolater, as of a thief or a murderer, or a traitor—that gross and pestilent heresies should be suppressed, and suppressed by the sword of the civil magistrate; that the power of the civil sword is to be extended to all spiritual and ecclesiastical things and causes—that the magistrate is, in a civil notion, the supreme governor in all causes ecclesiastical—that no individual has a right to set up his own cause in opposition to the established sentiments of society.*”

These are strong statements, and such as the author of *THE BATTLE OF THE TWO DIALOGUES* attributed to all Covenanters in 1818, as their unanimous and uniform opinions. Mr. Paul says he does not believe the doctrines contained in these statements. But he surely owes an apology to the author of the above publication, whose opinions respecting the principles of Covenanters on the power of the civil magistrate, are now more than justified by the testimony of ministers of Mr. Paul's own communion. Let him now decide this vital question in his own church before he again assails Dr. Bruce, Mr. Montgomery, and the author of the *Battle of the Two Dialogues*. He has now more important business on hands, than collecting the errors of the Press into pages, and exhibiting them against his opponents as momentous matters. Let him cast out first the *beam* that is in his own eye, and then shall he see clearly to pull out the *notes* that are in the eyes of others.—It is but justice to Mr. Paul to state, that he has, in 88th page of “*The Covenanter Reviewed*,” admitted that he was mistaken about the sentiments of some of the ministers of his own Synod. This is candid, and he



cannot of course be surprised, that members of other churches judge of the doctrines of Covenanters, not by *him* but by *them*. We think it is now high time for the advocates of human creeds and confessions to acknowledge, that *uniformity* has not been attained in the churches which use them, and that the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants.—EDITORS.

On Tuesday last, 10th July, the Reformed Presbyterian Synod held its annual meeting in this town, (Belfast,) in the Meeting-house of the Rev. Mr. Alexander, Linen-Hall-street. The Rev. Dr. Black, of Pittsburg, a delegate from the American Church, was invited to preach the introductory discourse—an invitation with which he complied. After the sermon the Rev. Thomas Houston, of Knockbracken, was chosen as Moderator. Till Friday the Synod was chiefly occupied in the arrangement of its own internal concerns, which presented no feature of general interest; but on the day mentioned, it was understood that a subject would be discussed, in which not only the members of the body itself, but the public at large have taken a serious interest—we allude to the subject of the civil Magistrate's power in religious matters, and especially whether he is to employ his secular authority for the forcible suppression of heretical opinions. The affirmative has been maintained in several numbers of a little periodical called the *Covanter*, and the negative has been as strenuously asserted and defended by Mr. Paul, with his usual ability, in a late publication on the subject. The members of the Synod have also taken opposite sides on the question, those who agree with Mr. Paul rejecting the doctrine as authorizing persecution, and as being an avowal of principles which, when imputed to them, Covenanters have uniformly repudiated as calumnies upon the body. On the other hand, the advocates of those principles declare that they are maintaining only the testimony of their ancestors in regard to these matters.

The subject was introduced by the Rev. Mr. Alexander, who read a paragraph from a number of the *Covanter*, in which the decision of last Synod was stated, viz: that the *Editor alone* was responsible for the sentiments advanced in the periodical; but the paragraph added that *general satisfaction* was expressed in the Synod with the *literary execution*, and with the *circulation* of the work. Mr. Alexander denied that any such satisfaction was expressed by the Synod, and he wished for an explanation on the subject.—Mr. Dick said, that several individuals expressed their satisfaction, and, as nothing was said to the contrary, it was taken for granted that the others had acquiesced.—Mr. Alexander said that there was a *specific deed* of Synod on the subject, disclaiming all responsibility for the publication—the statement in the *Covanter* referring to this deed was so mixed up with the expression of satisfaction, that he defied any man to tell which part belonged to the Synod, and which to the individuals who had been spoken of.—Mr. Henry who had just returned from America, where he had been as a delegate from the Synod here, said, that he first saw the paragraph alluded to in Liverpool, on his way home, and he certainly supposed from it that the Synod approved of the principles of the *Covanter*.—Dr. Black, the delegate from the American Church, said, that when he first saw

the paragraph, his impression respecting its meaning exactly coincided with that of Mr. Henry; and he felt astonished that the Synod should have sanctioned a publication which advocated downright *Erastianism*, in regard to the power of the civil Magistrate.

Mr. Houston and Mr. Dick strongly denied the charge of *Erastianism*, and when the proper time came they would be prepared to refute it.

The Rev. Clarke Houston said that he perfectly recollected the occasion alluded to, and he wished that those individuals who had expressed satisfaction, would now come forward and repeat it; for his firm belief was that there were only *two* who had spoken on the subject, Mr. Dick, and the Editor of the *Covenanter*, the Rev. Thomas Houston himself. The latter gentleman then said that a number of aged, respectable Ministers had to him distinctly expressed satisfaction on the subject, and as nothing was said to the contrary, he thought himself fully justified in the statement. Mr. Alexander repeated, that when the act of the Synod passed, not a single member spoke on the subject, except Mr. Dick and Mr. Houston himself.—Mr. Cathcart said that he had expressed satisfaction—several members replied that, if so, they did not hear him.

Mr. Paul said, suppose Dr. Chalmers's work on Political Economy were incidentally mentioned in the Synod, and that one member and another should rise up and praise it, would it be a fair representation to say that the Synod had *generally* expressed satisfaction with it? Several members had been mentioned, but if they did express satisfaction on that occasion, he (Mr. Paul) did not hear them, nor did a single member of his Presbytery hear them.—Even Mr. Dick did not express that satisfaction, for he praised the *Editor*, spoke of his talent &c. but said not one word about the merits of the publication. It was strange if the private whispers of members to one another in a seat were to go forth as the general sentiment of the body.

Mr. Dick said that the Editor of the *Covenanter* had positively asserted that *several* members expressed satisfaction—he (Mr. D.) had the power of attention, and had heard them; and Mr. Paul might have heard them too if *he* had been attending.

The Rev. Clarke Houston said, that great stress had been laid on the silence of members when the supposed satisfaction was expressed, and he had purposely reserved till now an important fact in relation to that subject. The satisfaction was expressed after an aged and venerable member of the body had been put down by violence and clamour, when he was about to say something unfavourable of the *Covenanter*, and after he had been told by those who had put him down that if he had anything against the Editor or his publication he must not state it there—he must bring it before the Editor's Presbytery. This fact would dissipate the conclusion which was sought to be drawn from the *silence* of members.

Mr. Dick said that Mr. Houston was perfectly correct as to the fact, but then it was a *charge* against the *Editor* that was to be brought before his Presbytery—not the mere expression of opinion as to literary merits.

Mr. Paul said, the question was, whether an individual had a right to take a certificate from that court, merely because one or

two, or even *three* individuals might express a favourable opinion of his work. If this principle were sanctioned, he would himself get two or three of his friends to praise his various publications—his *Refutation of Arianism*, for instance, and he would proclaim to the world their opinions as the general sentiments of the body.—Mr. Paul, on the suggestion of some members, moved that general approbation of the literary execution of the *Covenanter* was never expressed by this body. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alexander. Another member, we believe Mr. Cathcart, moved the previous question, which was carried by a considerable majority, after an angry discussion. Mr. Paul, and other members declared their intention of protesting against this dismissal of the subject. Mr. Paul said he would now think himself authorized to take out a certificate in the name of the body, for every book he had written.

A number of papers were then read, the first of which was a memorial from the Belfast Congregation, stating a number of principles relative to the coercive power of the civil Magistrate, on which they requested the Synod's decision. The memorialists declared that if these principles were really held by Covenanters, they had been deceived when they joined that body; for they had done so in the express belief that such were *not* its principles. The next paper was a letter from the Rev. John Paul to the Northern Presbytery, stating his reasons for declining to appear before them at the instance of the Rev. Thomas Houston. The reasons will be found in Mr. Paul's pamphlet before referred to—one of them was that Mr. Paul was not a member of that Presbytery, and consequently not subject to its Presbyterial jurisdiction. The third paper bore the ecclesiastical title of a "Libel," which was exhibited by the Rev. Thomas Houston against Mr. Paul, the leading charges of which were founded on Mr. Paul's strictures upon the *Covenanter* in the *News-Letter*, some time ago, and on Mr. Paul's more elaborate refutation of it in his pamphlet. The Libeller complained that Mr. Paul had in these publications used unkind language respecting him personally, had misrepresented his views, and had attempted to do serious injury to his character, by holding him up to the world as maintaining erroneous opinions, at variance with the Scriptures, and the true principles of Covenanters; and that he had also attempted to injure the complainant's interest in the *Covenanter*, by diminishing its circulation in consequence of the attack which he had made on its principles. The Rev. Mr. Alexander, the Rev. Mr. Orr, the Rev. Mr. Henry, and the Rev. C. Houston, were also named as accomplices in Mr. Paul's guilt, some for joining him in the circulation of a printed letter unfavourable to the *Covenanter*, and all of them for helping to circulate Mr. Paul's work against it.

The Rev. C. Houston said, it was wholly impossible for the Synod to go into the entire case at that late period, and he therefore moved that it be referred to a special meeting to be called for that purpose. This motion was seconded by Mr. Henry, but was warmly opposed by Mr. Alexander.

The Rev. Stewart Bates of Kelso, (a delegate from Scotland,) spoke at great length on the danger to be apprehended from the

discussion, and he strongly advised that it should be, at all events, deferred till next Synod. He concluded with a motion to this effect, which was seconded.—Dr. Black of America, said that the question was one of no great importance at present—it involved no terrible heresy, and certainly no opinion which one Minister might not tolerate in another. The church had been now 100 years without deciding it, and he thought it might at all events be deferred.

Mr. Alexander said that the procedure was altogether unprecedented, as he had never received a copy of the paper which had been read, and in which he was charged as an offender. His other friends were similarly situated, but still they were anxious to have an immediate investigation. By a manoeuvre almost the whole Presbytery to which he belonged had been precluded from voting, in consequence of their being charged as parties, and he was desirous of having the attendance of Dr. Black and Mr. Bates. On this account he wished the matter investigated now.

Mr. Thomas Houston said, that in regard to the papers he had fully observed the discipline of the Church, and Mr. Alexander might blame this, not him.—Only for his ordination vows he would have replied to Mr. Paul, as he had in his possession a full reply, but had hitherto withheld it. If he should be proved to be wrong by the Synod, he would publicly retract, and he expected the same from the other side.

Mr. Paul said it was no compliment to him to withhold the reply—he begged it might be instantly published, as his great anxiety all along was for a fair discussion. He had no doubt that they were very able men on the other side, and he entreated them to come forward and answer him. He wished much to see their answer, and, no doubt, the public would like to see it too.

Mr. Dick thanked Mr. Bates for his pacific address—the difference between the parties was not a great one, and matters could go on as usual till next Synod.

Mr. Alexander strongly protested against deferring the investigation, *unless that investigation should take place in Belfast, where the charges had been made*, and he would not have it hushed up in a corner. The motion of Mr. Bates, was put and carried, after which he stated his full concurrence with Mr. Alexander, that as a matter of justice to all the parties the discussion should take place in Belfast.—Mr. Dick said, that the Synod had already fixed upon *Moneymore* as the place of meeting, and the investigation must take place there. Mr. Paul, Mr. Henry, and others, joined in insisting on Belfast as the place for the investigation; but the point of order would not be conceded by the other side, and Mr. Thomas Houston resuming his seat as Moderator, which he had vacated during the debate, *authoritatively* put an end to the subject. A stormy scene ensued for some minutes, and not a little violent language was interchanged. Mr. Paul insisted on being heard, and obtained a hearing with considerable difficulty. He said that he was most decidedly opposed to a postponement of the discussion, because he had received a call from a congregation in America, and it was very probable that he might not be in this country at the next meeting of Synod.—Some routine business was afterwards transacted, and the Synod broke up at 5 o'clock.—*Belfast News-Letter.*



## REMONSTRANT SYNOD OF ULSTER.

THIS Reverend body assembled in the meeting-house of the Rev. James Davis, of Banbridge, on Tuesday, 17th July, for the purpose of holding their annual meeting. The late Moderator, the Rev. F. Blakely, commenced the proceedings, by preaching from 2d Corinthians, iv. 5.—“For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, the Lord.” From these words, he proceeded to point out, at considerable length, the insufficiency and presumption of human authority, interposed instead of the book of revelation; and showed, that, taking Christ for his Master, he neither could nor durst admit of any interference, on the part of fallible men like himself. He contended, that creed-making was a device of Priests, whether Protestant or Catholic, resorted to for the purpose of supporting their own authority and influence. He next gave a luminous review of the preaching of Christ and his Apostles; and concluded by vindicating the claims of Unitarians to the character of *Christian* teachers. The discourse, considered merely in reference to the ability which it manifested, was strongly characterized by great power and eloquence. Of this, the best proof was afforded by the deep interest with which it was listened to, by a very crowded audience of persons of various religious denominations, although it occupied nearly two hours in the delivery. We understand, that the sermon is to be published, together with one preached by the same gentleman, at the meeting of Synod, last year, in Larne. After Mr. Blakely had concluded, he constituted the Synod by prayer. He then requested, that a successor might be chosen to him. The Rev. Mr. Davis, and the Rev. Mr. Campbell, of Templepatrick, were then put in nomination; but the latter gentleman having begged leave to waive his claims, the Rev. Mr. Davis was unanimously chosen Moderator for the ensuing year. The Clerk then proceeded to read the minutes of last year, out of which nothing of general interest arose; and the Synod adjourned, at six o'clock, till ten the next day.

The Synod met yesterday morning, at ten o'clock, when the minutes of Tuesday's meeting, relative to the recognition of the Remonstrant Synod, by Government, as an independent Body, and a communication from the General Assembly of America, to the General Synod of Ulster, were read. Some conversation arose on reading the Overture of last year, appointing a Committee to watch over the civil rights of this Body, respecting the returns which have been made to the Government of this country, of the number of the Presbyterians in Ireland; and, in consequence of some information which was given to the Synod, by some of its members, it was resolved, that the Committee for watching over the civil rights of the Remonstrant Synod, appointed at its last meeting in Larne, be continued; that the Rev. F. Blakely, with I. W. Glenny, Esq. Mr. Emerson, and Dr. Stewart, Elders, be added to it; and that the Ministers of this Synod shall immediately make returns, to this Committee, of the number of seat-holders and others, for whom they respectively officiate: and that the Committee shall take such steps as may seem expedient to them, in consequence of these returns.



Mr. Charles M'Alister, a student of three years' standing, who has hitherto been under the care of the Presbytery of Bangor, in connexion with the General Synod of Ulster, having expressed his wish to be taken under the care of the Remonstrant Synod, was placed, at his own request, under the care of the Remonstrant Presbytery of Bangor.

At twelve o'clock, the Rev. Mr. Glendy preached an eloquent and impressive sermon, from Matthew, 20th chap. 26th, 27th, and 28th verses. The Reverend preacher took an opportunity of tracing the progress of that departure from the simplicity of the Gospel, which grew up, as he alleged, into the unscriptural domination of the Church of Rome; and, which, since the days of the Reformation, has continued to infect the Christian Church. The Rev. Gentleman proceeded to show, at great length, and with much ability, the evils which have resulted from the assumption of the unscriptural power, by some portions of the people, of deciding on the points of faith which it is necessary that all who attached themselves to the Christian Church should hold.

The result respecting Mr. M'Clean and the Congregation of Creggen was, that a Committee of the Synod was appointed to meet at Creggen, on Friday, the 27th instant, to institute a rigid investigation into all the circumstances which led that Congregation to secede from the Synod of Ulster, and to request to be taken under the care of the Remonstrants.

On Thursday morning, the Synod met, at ten o'clock. After the reading of the minutes of the last Session, a letter was read, from the Rev. George Harris, of Glasgow, as Secretary of the Scottish Unitarian Association, containing a resolution passed at the last meeting of that Society, congratulating the Remonstrants on the victory which they had achieved over religious bigotry and intolerance. A letter from the Rev. James Armstrong, Clerk of the Synod of Munster, was also read, from which it appeared, that that Synod approved of the triennial meeting of the three non-subscribing bodies, (the two Synods and the Presbytery of Antrim,) proposed by the Remonstrants, at their last meeting; but expressed a doubt of the possibility of effecting so desirable an object, from the local situation of the several bodies. The Synod of Munster, however, expressed a wish, that a deputation of the Remonstrants might be appointed to attend their next meeting, in Dublin, and to confer with them upon this subject. In consequence of this request, Messrs. Porter and Blakely were appointed to attend the next annual meeting of the Synod of Munster.

Mr. Montgomery, in an eloquent speech, directed the attention of the Synod, to the necessity of providing, with all possible speed, adequate Theological instruction for the Students under their care. At the same time, he pointed out to them, the impossibility of appointing a respectable permanent teacher of Theology during the present winter; and concluded by proposing, as a temporary expedient, until the Synod might be in a situation to make such an appointment, that a Committee be named to consult with the Presbytery of Antrim, and to obtain from them aid and counsel, in the Theological instruction of their Students, during the ensuing Session. To this proposition the Synod unanimously acceded.

A conversation of considerable length took place, respecting the Fund of the "Association for the Protection of the Rights of Conscience," and the steps which should be taken by the Synod, for increasing that Fund. Several plans were suggested by different members; but, the conclusion at which the Synod arrived, was, that they should make a respectful application to the trustees of the Fund, requesting them to send such deputations as they might deem proper, to the several towns in Ireland; and, that the Ministers of this Body should be instructed to assist the deputations in obtaining subscriptions.

The Synod then proceeded to pass several Overtures of considerable importance; and we regret, that our space will not permit us to give even a brief outline of the eloquent speeches, fraught with the most useful instruction, delivered by the movers and seconders, on introducing those Overtures to the notice of the Synod. We can, at present, only mention the objects contemplated by the resolutions. The first was, that a Committee should be appointed to compose or compile a volume of prayers, suitable for the use of the families connected with this body. The object of the second was, to appoint Sunday, the 16th day of September next, as a day of thanks-giving to Almighty God, for the great blessings which this Synod have experienced at His hand. The third Overture recommended to the Ministers of the Remonstrant Synod, the propriety of holding occasional meetings at convenient places, in their respective parishes, for the purpose of affording familiar instruction to the young and inexperienced of their Congregations. In the next Overture, the Synod enjoin the respective Presbyteries in their connexion, not to sustain, as a piece of judicial trials, any sermon delivered before them by the Students under their care, which shall not be repeated, (not read,) that, by this means, the Students may acquire greater fluency and energy in the delivery of their public discourses; and it is recommended to Probationers to continue the same salutary practice. By the last Overture, the Synod, after expressing their regret, that the system originally adopted by the Kildare-street Society had been so perverted by the injudicious zeal of some of its supporters, as to deprive that Society of the confidence of the people of this country, resolve to present petitions to both Houses of Parliament, in favour of the new system of National Education, proposed to be adopted in Ireland.

The thanks of the Synod were then voted to Mr. Joseph Glenny, of Newry, and to Messrs. Alexander and John Montgomery, of Belfast, for their kindness in devoting their time and professional labours to the cause of the Remonstrants in their difficulties; and, also, to the Rev. James Davis, and the respectable inhabitants of Banbridge, and its neighbourhood, for the attention which the Remonstrants had received at their hands during their sittings. The Synod concluded with prayer.

**DINNER TO THE REMONSTRANT SYNOD, AT BANBRIDGE.**

*(Abridged from the Northern Whig.)*

ON Wednesday, the 18th instant, a number of the respectable inhabitants of Banbridge, and its neighbourhood, entertained the Remonstrant Synod, at that time holding their annual meeting in

that town, at a public Dinner. The company, amounting to about 100 in number, sat down, at 7 o'clock, to a most excellent entertainment, provided by Mrs. Boyle, of the Downshire Arms. W. S. CRAWFORD, Esq. presided on the occasion: he was supported on the right by Mr. William Nicholson, a gentleman belonging to the Secession Church; on the left, by Mr. John Lindsay; and Messrs. Robert Henry, and James Charles Mulligan, acted as Croupiers. On the removal of the cloth,

The CHAIRMAN, on proposing the first toast, observed, that, at all times, the health of the reigning Sovereign, would be drunk with pleasure by the inhabitants of these countries, if for no other purpose than showing their attachment to the Monarchical form of Government; but, he presumed, greater enthusiasm and warmer feelings would be displayed, when he proposed the health of William IV. than on ordinary occasions. Our present Sovereign had, on his accession to the Throne, pledged himself to the effecting of a Reform in the Common's House of Parliament; and had continued so firm to his purpose, as utterly to disappoint an interested faction, who had endeavoured, by their intrigues, to frustrate the fondest hopes of the people. He concluded by proposing—

“The King.” (*Four times four.*)

“The Duke of Sussex, and the rest of the Royal Family.” (*Deafening cheers.*)

“The Lord Lieutenant, and prosperity to Ireland.” *Three times three.*

“The Army and Navy.”

Captain STANNUS having been loudly called for, acknowledged the honour conferred upon him, by requiring him to return thanks for this toast, and thus forcibly recalling to his recollection his early associations with the service of his country.

“Civil and Religious Liberty all the world over.”

The Rev. HENRY MONTGOMERY, having risen in obedience to the call of the assembly, spoke at considerable length.

“William Boyd, Esq., Secretary of the Association for the Protection of the Rights of Conscience.”

Mr. BOYD, in returning thanks, gave a brief account of the origin of that Association, of which he had the honour to be the Secretary: and of his connexion with it. In consequence of the persecution suffered by several of the Ministers who had joined the Remonstrants, some of the respectable merchants of Belfast felt themselves called on to come forward, and aid those individuals in their difficulties. A meeting was afterwards held in that town, for the purpose of taking into consideration what steps should be taken for supporting such Ministers as might be subjected to annoyance, from those who differed from them in opinion. At this meeting, though it was but thinly attended, upwards of 700*l.* was subscribed by the gentlemen present. It has, however, since, been so much increased, by the liberality of the inhabitants of Belfast, and its neighbourhood; and by the generosity of our friends in England, who were applied to, on this subject, by the Rev. Messrs. Montgomery, Blakely, and Mitchel, that it now amounts to £3,000. Mr. Boyd then proceeded to detail the objects to which the Association intended the proceeds of this fund should be applied; and

concluded by proposing the health of a gentleman to whose exertions they were much indebted.

“The Rev. Fletcher Blakely.”—Mr. BLAKELY returned thanks.

The CHAIRMAN, in proposing the next toast, observed, that they were all assembled as the friends of civil and religious liberty, and it was, therefore, their duty to pay a just tribute to those who had suffered in support of that cause. The Remonstrants conceived, that their rights had been infringed; and they were not to be deterred, by intimidation, from asserting the liberty of their consciences. In this, they but proved their own consistency, as they had always stood forward as the champions and defenders of the same liberty in others.—He proposed “The Remonstrant Synod.” (*Nine times nine.*)

The Rev. JAMES DAVIS returned thanks, and proposed the health of “The Chairman.” (*Immense cheering.*)

W. S. CRAWFORD, Esq., in returning thanks for the manner in which his health had been received, adverted to his having been lately called upon to lead the independent interest of the County of Down. He had, on that occasion, been subjected to misrepresentation and to calumny; but the mark of their confidence and respect, which was that night paid him, revived and cheered his spirits. Civil and religious freedom, he remarked, were necessarily connected together; any attempt to separate the one from the other, inevitably tended to the destruction of both. In support of his opinion, he referred to the history of our unfortunate country, and particularly to the period when the illustrious Grattan attempted to establish the independence of Ireland; his efforts, however, proved unavailing, and this fair country was laid prostrate at the feet of a corrupt Administration. The times, too, in which we live, sufficiently prove his (Mr. Crawford’s) position. It is totally impossible, that we can enjoy either civil or religious freedom, in its full extent, so long as one Church or one creed receives its support from the pockets of the nation by compulsion. If the Established Church were not so supported,—if the burdensome and unjust tax, by which its coffers are filled, were abolished, and the Clergy of the Establishment rewarded for their labours, by those who derived benefit from those labours, it might be looked upon as a rallying point by all denominations of Protestants. But, though he (Mr. Crawford) earnestly expected to see the Establishment put upon its just and proper footing, he trusted, that he never would see any other sect attempt to assume the authority which that Church has so long usurped. It seemed to him (Mr. Crawford) exceedingly strange, that those who are forcing the poison on the people, those who are using their utmost endeavours to establish the Church upon a surer and firmer foundation, are, themselves, at the same time, affording the antidote. They have proposed a system of education for the people of this country; and though its steps are slow, they will be sure. When the people have received the benefits of the education proposed to be bestowed upon them, they will shake off the bonds to which they have so long submitted; and free themselves from the trammels of an unjust ecclesiastical domination. Mr. Crawford sat down amidst the most enthusiastic applause.

“Rev. William Crosier and the Synod of Munster.” (*Loud Cheers.*)

Mr. Crosier returned thanks.

“Mr. Boyd, and the Presbytery of Antrim.” (*Cheers.*)



Mr. BOYD suitably acknowledged the compliment paid him, and the religious body with which he was connected.

"The Press, the Palladium of Civil and Religious Liberty."  
(Continued Cheering.)

"The Northern Whig was particularly noticed, when this toast was proposed.

At this period of the evening, several letters were read from Leonard Dobbin, Esq., of Armagh, and several other friends of religious liberty, who were unavoidably prevented from being present on that occasion; after which the Rev. H. Montgomery proposed

"The healths of Mr. Dobbin, and the other friends who would have been present had circumstances permitted."

Mr. COLVILLE DICKSON returned thanks.

"The Belfast Royal Academical Institution."

The Rev. H. MONTGOMERY referred to the liberal principles on which the Institution had been founded.

"Our liberal Christian Brethren, of all denominations."

The Rev. JOHN FISHER returned thanks.

"The members of other Churches who have favoured us with their company, on the present occasion."

The Rev. Mr. ORR returned thanks.

"The Rev. William Porter, and the National System of Education."

Mr. PORTER, in returning thanks, declared his devotion to the cause of the new system.

"The Marquis of Downshire, the Lord of the Soil."

"The Rev. James Davis, and the Congregation of Banbridge."

(Cheers.)

Mr. DAVIS acknowledged the compliment paid to him and the Congregation of which he was Minister.

"The Stewards."

Messrs. M'LELLAND and D. LINDSAY returned thanks.

The Rev. H. MONTGOMERY begged to propose

"The Memory of Messrs. M'Williams, M'Clelland, and Smith, who had been zealous members of the Congregation of Banbridge, and ardent friends of religious liberty."

This toast was drank in the most solemn silence.

The Rev. F. BLAKELY begged leave to propose the "health of Mr. John Sharman Crawford," and hoped, that, throughout life, he would follow the noble example of both his grandfathers.

Mr. JOHN CRAWFORD returned thanks.

The Rev. W. PORTER proposed—

"The health of our kind Entertainers, and many thanks to them."

Mr. CARLILE returned thanks.

"The Town and Trade of Banbridge."

Mr. HENRY returned thanks.

"The health of the Croupiers."

"The Linen Trade, and prosperity to it."

Mr. D. LINDSAY returned thanks.

"The Probationers of the Remonstrant Synod."

The Rev. T. H. OSBORNE returned thanks.

The Rev. H. MONTGOMERY, after referring to the persecution to which Mr. Campbell had been exposed, and having passed a warm eulogium on the character of that gentleman, proposed—



"The health of the Rev. Robert Campbell."

MR. CAMPBELL returned thanks.

The company soon after separated, much delighted with the harmony and brotherly kindness which had characterised the whole of their proceedings.

#### OBITUARY.

It is with deep regret we have to record the death of WILLIAM TENNENT, Esq., on the 20th July, at the age of 74. He was attacked by this "pestilence that walketh in darkness," at four o'clock, A. M. and breathed his last in the space of thirteen hours, at five o'clock, P. M. In him we have lost one whose presence we never missed when any thing was to be done for the benefit of the town or its charities. And when the object was to promote the great interest of Unitarian Christianity, he was always most forward, and prompt with his personal attendance and his pecuniary aid. No meeting was ever held for the furtherance of these great objects at which he was not present; and we may mention more especially, that he began the subscription list for forming the Fund for the Protection of the Rights of Conscience, and that he contributed liberally to the Unitarian Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge. It was by his suggestion that this application was adopted, showing the extensive view which he took of the operation of the Society. Great too was his influence in all the mercantile and political concerns of the town of Belfast. Cultivated and enlightened was his mind on various branches of literature and science:—but we naturally dwell most upon that part of his character where the loss is to us most serious.

OF Spasmodic Cholera, on the 27th ultimo, after fourteen hours illness, in the 48th year of his age, and the 21st of his ministry, the Rev. James Alexander Johnson, of the 1st Presbyterian Congregation, Holywood. Mr. Johnson was a man of very varied talent. He was a skilful divine, a faithful minister, an eloquent preacher, and an excellent general scholar. Few ministers, if any, were ever more highly esteemed by all ranks and denominations. He was polite, high-minded, and agreeable in all the relations of life. The charitable and other institutions of Holywood have lost a generous and active supporter in the death of Mr. Johnson.

He was born on the banks of the lower Bann, near Portglenone, and was first settled with the congregation of Banagher, County Derry, where he remained about eight years, and where he left an affectionate people, not for a larger salary, but that he might enjoy the society of more kindred spirits in Holywood, Belfast, Newtownards, Dunmurry, and Moneyrea: the present ministers of the last two places being his early and confidential friends.

Mr. Johnson was educated in the school of Calvinism, but he became a decided Unitarian by searching the Scriptures, which were "the only rule" in directing him in all religious matters. He supported his opinions with steady zeal, without the least bigotry. He has left a large and respectable circle of friends, a kind congregation, an affectionate wife, and two loving little sons, to mourn his sudden and unexpected death. He has been cut off in the meridian of usefulness, and in the act of using his best endeavours to save others from the very disease which proved fatal to himself.

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

---

No. VIII.

SEPTEMBER, 1832.

VOL. III.

---

THE PEOPLING OF THE GLOBE.\*

WITHOUT the Five Books of Moses mankind must have remained for ever ignorant of the creation of the world, and their own origin; of the progress of primitive society, and the arts of life, and of the place of their nativity, and their dissemination over the earth. From Moses we learn that we are descended from one pair who were planted in a genial climate, a fruitful soil, and a situation central to the world; whence their progeny might easily spread over the face of the earth. After several centuries the whole race of men were swept away by a deluge except the family of Noah, which was preserved for the continuation of the species; from his three sons were descended all the people that now inhabit the globe. Sir William Jones, by his extraordinary knowledge and critical skill of the languages spoken both in the east and west, was emboldened to trace the nations now inhabiting the world up to their original progenitors, Shem, Ham, and Japhet respectively.

The first eleven chapters of Genesis are an introduction to the history of mankind; the twelfth gives an account of their multiplication and dispersion. This proceeded with the usual vigour of that natural principle which even now impels men to burst the restraints and limits of civilized society, and overflow the most remote and inhospitable regions.

With respect to the date of the creation of man, there is some variation in different calculations. Nothing is more uncertain than numbers in ancient records; nor more liable to error in transcribing, for they are often marked by numeral letters or characters, which bear a near resemblance to each other, and the same character denotes different numbers, according to certain minute marks and accents attached to it. Hence it has

---

\* For Creation, Flood, &c. see page 253.

happened, that some diversity subsists among the copies and versions of Scripture, as to the period of our creation. According to the Hebrew copies now in use, it took place about 5850 years ago. The old Samaritan version, made under the early kings of Israel, dates it about 700 years sooner; and the ancient Greek version, which was in general use in our Saviour's time, and quoted by the writers of the New Testament, carries it back near 1200 years further. We are, therefore, at liberty to assume, that man was created 7700 years ago.

The Old Testament itself is the only authentic history that can lay claim to a remote antiquity, or that pretends to give an account of the origin of the world or of man; and this venerable record is consistent with itself, as to the original formation of the earth, the creation of the human race, and the progress of population. On this last subject the twelfth chapter of Genesis is a most curious and valuable document. The whole narrative evinces the recent peopling of those countries, and all from the same parts of Asia; and that they could lay no claim to a chimerical antiquity. "Whatever be the comparative antiquity of the Hindoo Scripture, we may safely conclude, that the Mosaic and Indian chronologies are perfectly consistent." Sir W. Jones' works, vol. 4, p. 64.

With this the early traditions of the Greeks accord; for they all boasted of being descended from colonies emigrating from the east, at periods, that agree with the Mosaical history.—Even their fables attest the lateness of their origin. We find one person deified for the discovery of corn, another immortalized for the invention of the simplest and most necessary implements of husbandry; all incontestably proving the youth and inexperience of the species.

When we descend to more authentic history, we find the same facts corroborated beyond a doubt. Even the late invention of history itself is a demonstration, that mankind could not be much older than the Mosaical period of their creation; for it is not credible, that they could have subsisted for such an immense tract of time, as has been assigned to them, without discovering some method of transmitting an account of themselves to

future generations. The same may be said of language, arts, and science. If these were at last discovered by chance, why did not this happen sooner, in a series of so many thousand years? If by reason or genius, why did not human reason operate at an earlier period, in discovering the most useful and even necessary accommodations of life, in such genial climates, and among some one of those nations, which afterwards, and almost on a sudden, attained to such a degree of excellence, in every capacity of their nature. Instead of those extravagant notions of antiquity, we see the whole world and its various tribes growing up from infancy to maturity, within the era of the Mosaical creation, and subsequently to the deluge. Long after that date we find the greater part of the earth uninhabited. We then see tribes of men settling in small societies—growing into larger communities;—these again sending out colonies; and the whole spreading into extensive empires. During the same period, we can trace the invention and improvement of languages, arts, and sciences, civilization, government, and religion. Far from any evidence or necessity appearing for a longer tract of time,—all this has taken place in three or four thousand years. “We find no certain monument, nor even probable tradition of nations planted, empires and states raised, laws enacted, cities built, navigation improved, commerce encouraged, arts invented, or letters contrived, above twelve, or at most fifteen or sixteen centuries before the Birth of Christ.” (Sir Wm. Jones.) The astronomical calculations of the Chinese and Hindoos, which seem to controvert this opinion, have been either found to be fallacious, or may have been computed backwards; as a modern astronomer may now calculate the time at which an eclipse would have taken place ten thousand years ago, if the world had then been created. In short, without the aid of Moses, we could not have traced the commencement of society, learning, and arts, as far back as he has done. He gives us a higher idea of the antiquity of mankind, than civil history could have afforded. Here there is a wonderful corroboration of the veracity of Moses. These various unconnected and independent testimonies, arising after so many thousand years, in

favour of a point so audaciously denied, and with such an ostentation of learning, may justly inspire us with an assurance, that other miraculous portions of scripture will hereafter be confirmed by human experience.

Another position laid down by Moses, is the descent of all mankind from one pair. Some have imagined, that scripture only relates the origin of man in one quarter of the globe. This, however, I conceive to be a mere hypothesis, invented to elude a supposed difficulty; but as there is no insuperable difficulty, we may dispense with the hypothesis.—To avoid the irreverent repetition of the sacred name of God, I shall adopt the usual practice of substituting for it the word nature, which implies the operations and providence of the Almighty.—I say, then, that nature does nothing in vain; and that nature delights in variety and change; and on these two acknowledged principles I shall endeavour to vindicate the narrative of Moses. From the first, I shall argue, that one pair is sufficient for our purpose; and from the second I shall account for that variety in the species which has been thought incompatible with a single origin.

I leave it to arithmeticians and naturalists to calculate the rapid increase of mankind, in a given period, in the most genial climate and most fruitful country; only desiring, that they may take into the account the longevity of the patriarchs. It is obvious, that this was also necessary to the purposes of providence; for it was the means of preserving the traditions relative to the creation and the primitive history of the world in their purity, since they passed through fewer hands, and the events themselves might be testified for several ages, and to many generations, by witnesses living at the time. It likewise conduced to the preservation and transmission of the principles of true religion and useful knowledge, and was agreeable to the intentions of divine wisdom, if not absolutely necessary to the peopling of the infant world.—But it is equally clear to a candid reader, that Moses never introduced this nor any other supposition, as necessary to verify his history or support his testimony.



I believe, that on computation, it will appear, that the propagation of mankind, within the period of the Mosaic history, would be sufficiently rapid to account for all his facts; and that as the process must always advance with an accelerated velocity, the number of individuals, now on the earth, may be easily accounted for, without supposing more than one stock.

There was only one circumstance that could retard this progress. If, instead of dispersing, and seeking new habitations for every successive generation, they had collected into communities, tribes, and nations; and established different systems of government, they would have been incommoded for want of room, and have engaged in intestine feuds and external wars. These circumstances were likely enough to have taken place, and would certainly have impeded the dissemination and multiplication of the species. An attempt of this kind was actually made by the builders of Babel, but was defeated by a providential interposition, and even made subservient to a more rapid dispersion of the people concerned than might otherwise have taken place. "As they journeyed from the east, they found a plain, and dwelt there; and they said, let us build a city and a tower, and make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad." Now this dispersion which they feared, was the very thing intended by providence. "Therefore, the Lord said, let us go down and confound their language. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence, upon the face of the earth; and they left off to build the city." Whether this effect was produced by causing them to speak different dialects, which would account for the difference, and the similarity of languages; or as some think by exciting a difference of opinion, and thus disconcerting their plan, it effectually removed this impediment to the dissemination of mankind. If, then, all the men that have occupied the earth from the beginning, may have sprung from our first parents, there is no occasion to seek for any other origin of the human race. This conclusion I draw from two principles:—first, that nature does nothing in vain, or superfluous: and secondly, that when one cause is sufficient to account for any effect, it is unphilosophical to assign two. These are points admitted as axioms by philosophers.

The only difficulty remaining under this head, is the dispersion of these multitudes over portions of the earth, which, at first, appear inaccessible to people in a rude state of society. This was once considered as an insuperable objection. It was thought impossible, that mankind, in an uncivilized state, could have made their way to the western continent. This was the only difficulty—for the rest of the world is one connected continuous surface. This notion, however, arose merely from the imperfect state of geographical knowledge. In the first place, it does not appear that America was peopled at an early period of the world. This cannot be supposed, from the state in which the natives were found, or now exist; nor is it probable from their situation, with respect to those regions in which Adam was created, that his descendants should have migrated, in many ages, so far to the north, as was necessary to their passing into America by that course. Present appearances, therefore, and the Mosaical history agree. But whensoever their migrations were sufficiently extended, we now know, that there was no difficulty in passing from one continent to the other: for the distance between Asia and America is so short, that the savages of America frequent the fairs in Siberia. There is also another northern route, by which they might have sailed from island to island with the greatest facility. These chains of rocky and mountainous islands may be the remains of a land that once connected America and Asia. The four quarters of the world were then united; and a traveller might traverse the whole world on foot. There is therefore, no insurmountable obstacle to peopling the continents.

But it will be said, that the greatest difficulty remains. There are in the world innumerable islands, dispersed over the ocean, many of them at such a distance from any continent, that it is hard to conceive how they could be visited by men in a rude state of society. This is, no doubt, very embarrassing; but equally so, upon either supposition. *We* say, that they may have been wafted from one land to another in succession, in their canoes, by the winds and currents, which uniformly prevail in those latitudes.—Now, what must

the unbelievers in the Mosaical account substitute in place of this? They must suppose, that a separate creation took place in every one of these inaccessible islands; and this, notwithstanding the striking resemblance that obtains among the inhabitants of the most distant.—Which of these opinions is most probable, I think I may leave to the decision of common sense.

The most popular and striking objection to the descent of all men from Adam and Eve, however, arises from the great diversity among different races of men. This I account for by the strong tendency to variety and change that exists in nature. There is a beautiful uniformity, elegant symmetry, and perpetual consistency in the general plan; but an infinite variety in the minuter parts.

There are no two trees, even of the same species, exactly alike, nor even two leaves on the same stem, nor two flowers on the same stalk. This occurs in their uncultivated state; but take the wild plant into your garden, and what innumerable varieties may you produce? These transplanted flowers bear no seed; the uncultivated do. Let one of these seeds be sown and you have a still greater number of varieties. We should remember, then, that man also exists in a variety of soils and climates, is susceptible of various degrees of culture and civilization, and subject to a greater variety of accidents, habits, and intermixtures, than vegetables; and, therefore, as great varieties may originate in the same stock.

Select any of our domesticated animals, and observe how every individual differs in external appearance, size, colour, and the like. If we take a view of the country at large, we find a different breed of some of these animals in every district, differing not only in accidental circumstances, but in figure and parts of the body. You will also discover, that these differences may be varied indefinitely by the care and art of man. Now is it not plain, that man himself is also susceptible of similar diversities, occasioned by different modes of living, and particularly by intermarriages? Accordingly, the inhabitants of every country are distinctly marked, and even the people of neighbouring countries, and the individuals of the same family. I may add,

that no two men are alike, but are distinguished by their complexions, features, size, gait, gestures, handwriting, and voice, even in the same household.

If, therefore, the variety in the human species indicates separate origins, it must do so in every kind of animals; and, if one of these varieties requires a separate creation, every one of them must do so; for if one of them may take place by certain habits and modes of treatment, so may all the rest. Are we, then, to suppose, that every animal and every man that differs from another, sprung from a separate creation? If, on the contrary, we have discovered the mode of producing those varieties in plants and animals, and if we can observe them taking place in man, conformably to certain circumstances of climate, food, and society, we have no reason to suppose a multitude of separate creations, but may conclude, that men have all descended from a common parent.

This point might be explained in a more satisfactory manner, by descending to a technical detail of the changes, not only superficial but anatomical, actually caused by climate, food, states of society, habits of life, and peculiar customs.—Thus “God hath made of *one* blood *all* nations of men, for to dwell on *all* the face of the earth.” Acts xvii. 26.

ERASMUS.

---

### CHRIST CONSOLING THE DISCIPLES.

(JOHN xiv. 1, 2, 3.)

---

“LET not your hearts be troubled,”—Jesus said  
 To his disciples;—“trust in God your Friend;  
 And trust in me, the Saviour he did send  
 To raise mankind in sin and trespass dead!  
 In his high dwelling, many mansions are:—  
 I would have told you if it were not so;—  
 ’Tis to prepare a place for you I go:  
 And when for you a mansion I prepare,  
 I tarry not for ever:—once again  
 To this my earthly dwelling-place I come,  
 And take you hence unto my heavenly home,  
 That where I am you ever may remain!”  
 How sweet, O blessed Lord! the call will be,  
 That summons us from earth to live with thee!

ANECDOTE RESPECTING MR. WHISTON.

---

WILLIAM WHISTON, commonly called Honest Will Whiston, was born in Leicestershire, in 1667. He was a good divine, a famous mathematician, and one of the confidential friends of Sir Isaac Newton. He was expelled the University of Cambridge, in which he was one of the Professors, for his zeal in the dissemination of Unitarianism. The following Anecdote, taken from the *Life of Bishop Newton*, should be better known, as it gives proof of that simplicity and sincerity for which Mr. Whiston was so justly distinguished.

“Whiston was a pensioner to Queen Caroline, who sometimes admitted him to the honour of her conversation, and paid the pension with her own hands. One day she said to him,—Mr. Whiston, I understand you are a free speaker, and honestly tell people of their faults; no one is without faults, and I wish you would tell me of mine; and she pressed him to do so. He was still upon the reserve, and she pressed him the more. Well, said he, since your Majesty insists upon it, I must obey you. There are abundance of people who come out of the country every spring to London, and they all naturally desire to see the King and Queen, and have not any opportunity of seeing your Majesties so conveniently as at the Chapel Royal; but these country folks, who are not used to such things, when they see your Majesty talking with the King, almost all the time of divine service, are perfectly astonished, and depart with strange impressions into their respective countries, and make their reports there, (let me tell you,) not at all to your Majesty’s honour.—I am sorry for it, answered the Queen; I believe there may be too much truth in what you say; but pray, Mr. Whiston, tell me of another fault. No, Madam, said he, let me see you mend of this, before I tell you of another.”

---



## ON THE PROMOTION OF CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

THE apathy of the Unitarian public with relation to the diffusion of Christian truths and principles, has often been made the subject of complaint; nor can it be denied that such indifference, wherever it exists, deserves to be severely censured.

When a person, who from the favourable circumstances of his birth and education, has been enabled to acquire enlarged and enlightened views on religion, is supine enough to allow his fellow-creatures to remain in gross ignorance of many truths of the greatest importance, without making any effort to dispel that ignorance, he exposes himself to no trifling reproach. He dishonours the Deity; for he suffers His word to continue encumbered with the spurious additions of man's philosophy, and permits His character to be exposed to ungrounded calumnies and injurious imputations, arising from the acts and purposes which are ascribed to him by fallible men; but which are often directly contradictory both to his nature and to his own express declarations. He acts unjustly towards his own principles; to which, if he believes them to be true, he is bound to give the widest possible circulation. He lays himself open to the charge of inconsistency by maintaining opinions which he is either afraid or ashamed publicly to avow, and explicitly to defend. He acts with cruelty to his fellow-men; from whom he withholds information which it is in his power to bestow, and which it is often of great consequence to them to receive. For although no Unitarian will for one moment entertain the notion that the adoption of his own creed is essential to salvation, still there can be no consistent Unitarianism without a conviction of the importance of the Unitarian faith as a means and motive for the pursuit of holiness, and as a ground of peace and joy and happiness of heart, in the present life. Ignorance on religious matters is the fruitful mother of misery and crime. The evils arising from bigotry and party-spirit more especially, are, in almost every instance, referable to this cause. If any individual refuses to exert a part at least of his energies and influence to

remove the cause, he must be regarded as doing his best to perpetuate the consequent evils. He looks listlessly on while prejudices are thickening and closing around the minds of his fellow-mortals; choking the growth of their mental powers, and excluding the light of knowledge. He looks on while bigotry, the offspring of prejudice, is extending far and wide her pernicious dominion; teaching man to regard his brother with aversion; and attributing the same narrowness of affection, and the same partiality of purpose to the adorable Creator. He looks on while party-spirit, arising from religious bigotry, is carrying into action the feelings which that bigotry has engendered, arraying different classes in hostile ranks, prepared even for mutual slaughter, on the most trivial provocation; and thus perpetuating feuds, discords, and animosities. He looks on while the name of God is blasphemed, and the religion which he has given is dishonoured by being employed as the pretext and alleged as the sanction to theories that confound the distinction between right and wrong, outrage common sense, and manifestly tend to promote confusion and every evil work. A person who has it in his power to prevent, or in any degree retard the growth of these mischiefs, and yet neglects to employ his powers for this purpose, incurs a very weighty and serious responsibility. He violates the spirit of the Christian law; which commands him to do unto his neighbour as he would that his neighbour should do unto him.

Many persons seem to imagine that the diffusion of their views of truth is an object in which their own honour, their own feelings, their own views and purposes, are chiefly concerned; and hence they take it for granted that it is one in which they are at perfect liberty to engage or not, as their convenience or interest may suggest. When any individuals enter upon the task with such motives only, and under the impulse of no higher promptings than those afforded by these personal or selfish considerations,—it is no wonder that their efforts in the cause should be so languid and so desultory as they are frequently discovered to be. It would be very strange and wonderful indeed if they were attended with any great or striking success. A great

cause is advanced, not by efforts of this kind, nor by the instrumentality of men such as these; but by the labours of those who feel an interest in its prosperity for its own sake; who do their best to promote it from a principle of conscience and of duty; and who are supported and cheered in all their discouragements and difficulties, by the strength of that inward principle of love to God and man, which constrains them to apply themselves to the object which they have undertaken. Such are the only persons to whom we can look for those zealous persevering and well-sustained exertions which are necessary to combat the pride and prejudice, and vanity of the world, that are arrayed against the simple truth of the Gospel of Christ. Such are the only labourers whose endeavours the God of the pure in heart can be expected to bless.

The motive, then, which we would principally urge upon the attention of those who may have it in their power to assist, to any extent, in the diffusion of religious knowledge, arises from those feelings and principles, which religion itself inspires. No man ever loved his Creator as he ought: no man ever venerated as he ought the glorious character and perfections of that adorable Being, who regarded it as a matter of indifference whether his attributes were correctly appreciated, and the plan of his providence distinctly understood; or whether, on the other hand, his character were grossly misrepresented; human passions, nay passions worse than human, attributed to him; and caprice, not virtue,—fury, not justice, assigned as the law of his conduct towards his creatures.—If any man claimed to be a friend to a human being, whom he knew to be a person of sterling worth and unbending integrity, but whose character he suffered to be maligned, and whose motives he allowed to be treated with injustice in his presence,—without endeavouring to correct the error and remove the misconception,—should we not at once pronounce his claims to the character of friend to the person so unjustly aspersed, to be futile, groundless, false? Equally futile and groundless are our claims to be considered as friends to God, if we do not make some exertions to vindicate his character from reproach, and place before

the eyes of men his attributes in their just and true light, in order that their grace and loveliness may be correctly apprehended. Nor is the force of this argument evaded by replying, as is often done, that the persons by whom, as we conceive, the character of the Supreme Being is thus imperfectly understood and incorrectly represented, have no intention to degrade their Maker; but on the contrary think, as they sometimes do, that they are honouring and exalting, instead of vilifying and debasing him by the conduct and motives which they ascribe to him; and, at all events, are firmly convinced they only give the same views of the divine nature which God has given of himself. This may be all very true; but it is not to the purpose: for our conduct must be estimated, not according to the opinions of others; but according to our own: and if we believe,—as we do and must believe,—that the prevalent misconceptions of the nature and providence of God are dishonourable to him, and mischievous to mankind, we are bound to use our best exertions, in our several spheres of action, to restrain their farther progress, and counteract their influence. When we neglect this duty, we prove that we are destitute of a fixed and firm piety; we show that we are devoid of that love and faith which we are commanded to cherish towards our Maker: we manifest that we have never been seriously impressed with that perfect reverence and admiration which his nature is calculated to inspire: we declare that we do not mean what we say when we call him the Best of Beings. If we believed God to be the best of beings, it would be next to an impossibility that we should regard with total indifference the efforts which are continually made to hold him up to mankind as in many particulars the very contrary of what he is. There is no more powerful and persuasive thought than the idea that when promoting the progress of religious truth we are contributing in our measure, and according to our means, to remove the misconceptions of men with regard to the Friend and Father of all; and to lead them to contemplate him, not in the false light of ignorance or mistake, but through the eye of an enlightened faith; to adore him, not with the servile homage of trembling slaves, but with the soul-inspiring devotion of a pure and rational worship: and to love him, not from

the narrow principle of a selfish system, but as the great and good Universal Parent.

In these observations, we have chiefly spoken of the views which men entertain respecting the Supreme Being; because, as is universally allowed, this subject is the most important in itself, the most diversified in its applications, and the most extensively related to the other branches of human belief and morals. It must be admitted by any man who really loves the truth, to be a very grave and weighty subject of inquiry, whether there be One only God, the sole Author and Governor of the Universe; or whether three Persons, Distinctions, or Somewhats, be associated together, and make up, when united, the idea of the Divinity. The individual, who impressed with a deep conviction that the former statement is true and the latter false,—and influenced by a sense of what is due to the honour of the One Infinite Mind, which he regards as alone entitled to religious homage, goes forth to vindicate the sole and undivided Deity of the Father,—must feel himself to be engaged in a work of no ordinary magnitude; for he is thereby turning deluded men from the worship of imaginary divinities to the knowledge and fear of that Eternal One who will not give his glory to another. And precisely in the same manner,—and for reasons of the same kind, though perhaps still stronger in their nature,—will the opponent of those dangerous and unscriptural doctrines, Unconditional Election, Arbitrary Reprobation, Satisfaction and Original Sin, feel himself strengthened in the performance of his duty by recollecting that the errors against which he contends are not only most injurious to the moral character and the happiness of man; but most dishonourable to God; unfounded accusations and imputations upon him,—contrary to his own words, contrary to his very nature; and tending to render him an object of fear and of dislike, instead of love. When combating such monstrous suppositions he will feel himself to be employed in no less important a work than that of justifying the Almighty from scandalous aspersions which have been thrown upon him, and setting forth his goodness, truth, and wisdom, in their true and genuine colours. He will consider himself as an advocate who pleads the cause of God: nor can any reflections be more consolatory than those which such a consideration will suggest.



The same mode of reasoning may be applied to every one of the doctrines contained in sacred Scripture. Every one of these doctrines came pure and perfect from the Almighty; but many of them have been deformed and defaced by the contrivances of men, ever anxious to be wise beyond that which is written. Here, then, there is an ample field for the exercise of industry and skill. Weeds have sprung up in the garden of God, which have almost choked the rising crop of fertile grain. It is a noble occupation to clear away these cumberers of the ground; to remove these errors and misconceptions from the human mind; and to present once more to the eyes of men pure and uncontaminated Christianity, such as she proceeded from her Divine Author,—the friend of truth and virtue; the ally of liberty and happiness. It is a blessed and a glorious undertaking to attempt to eradicate prejudices and errors from the souls of men; and to implant those seeds of true religion, which, if properly cultivated, will yield an abundant produce, even unto everlasting life. This is to be indeed a fellow-helper together with God. This is an occupation also in which every individual has a full and fair opportunity to engage, either by actually entering upon the work himself, or by countenancing, encouraging, and supporting those who do: cheering them in their labours, by sympathy; and guiding them by timely advice into the most suitable mode of employing their energies.

It cannot be denied that such zeal as these observations have been intended to recommend, has hitherto been by no means so common as was to have been desired, among the Unitarians in this country. It would not be difficult to point out situations where the lamentable effects of religious ignorance have been largely produced in the immediate neighbourhood, and under the personal observation of men of intelligence, influence, and respectability; who were far too enlightened, not to perceive the mischievous tendency of the prejudices which prevailed around them; far too acute not to be able to trace them to their source; and who at the same time possessed the means of doing much towards removing the evil, and averting its disastrous results; but who contentedly allowed things to take their own course; satisfied if they could slip through

life in a quiet, easy way, without intermeddling in the turmoil, and without incurring any of the consequent inconveniences, which they could possibly avoid.

It must not be supposed that all who have pursued this indolent and unprofitable course, have been destitute of genuine philanthropy, or of deep-seated religious feeling. Many persons of undoubted piety and undeniable general benevolence, thought themselves not only justified in adopting this plan of procedure, but even compelled by conscientious principle to follow it. We must, in estimating the characters of such persons, make large allowances for the influence which early associations and long continued habits exercise on all minds. It is not unnatural that those with whom religion has ever been a sacred feeling, influencing the heart to devotion and the life to goodness,—a feeling too deep and holy to be ostentatiously displayed before the eyes of men on every trifling occasion,—should be reluctant to enter upon any plans, by which as they may conceive,—religion may be made the subject of frequent controversy, and perhaps of interminable discussion. It is by no means wonderful, if the irksome and disagreeable task which in many cases must necessarily be undertaken as the means of bringing men to the knowledge of the truth, should occasionally diminish in their estimation, the value and importance of the end. Having been accustomed, perhaps, to hear of exertions for the dissemination of doctrinal views, as made only on one side of the question, and that the side to which they are opposed, they have imbibed for them a thorough dislike; and cannot easily be brought to see the necessity of engaging in such operations themselves. Probably they may even imagine that such endeavours may, if injudiciously conducted, increase the evils which they are intended to prevent: perhaps they may suppose that instead of tending ultimately to peace, harmony, and concord, they will promote only strife and alienation. Such persons have frequently been deceived by supposing, that the most effectual testimony which can be borne to the truth, is that which is afforded by the lives of her votaries; and have refrained from active co-operation in her defence, lest they should retard that success, by their ill directed, though well meant endeavours, which they are so anxious to accelerate. They often satisfy themselves

with a few commonplace maxims, concerning the power of God to maintain his cause—maxims whose truth is unquestionable, but whose application is not always free from ambiguity. They can hardly be brought to see and acknowledge that the altered state of society requires at present remedies, to which former days were unaccustomed.

Such are the reasons which sometimes influence wise and worthy men, not only to abstain from making any active efforts to promote the diffusion of religious truths, to which they are sincerely attached, but also to discountenance and discourage those who enter into the field of labour, which they are disposed to leave neglected and uncultivated. When, as we have already stated, we take into account the hold which such opinions have acquired upon several persons, by habit and association, we cannot severely condemn their conduct, when they act as these reasonings would lead us to expect. But it would be easy to show the futility of these and all similar arguments. Truth was never yet promoted by the cowardly policy of skulking away from her defence when she was attacked; nor will she now. The bitterness and wrath of mankind is not always augmented by controversy about difference of opinion: on the contrary, when ignorance is enlightened or arrogance rebuked in a becoming manner, controversy becomes a most effective engine for the advancement of peace and harmony. When men see that something may be said on their opponent's side, and that he is not afraid to say what he believes to be just, in defence of his opinions, they will acquire additional respect both for his head and heart; and will be much more disposed than they would otherwise have been, to consider the nature and foundations of his creed. Divine Providence is no doubt able to promote and establish divine truth without any exertions or efforts on our part; but practically we find that Divine Providence promotes its ends by human means: and it is our highest interest, honour, and duty, to embark as agents in that cause on which, as we are persuaded, God looks with approbation. Indeed so obvious are the answers to all these objections, that although they are undoubtedly urged with sincerity by some few individuals, there is reason to apprehend they have been adopted by others only because they afford the

most plausible excuse for their own indolence. Better it were for such persons to declare at once that they value their own ease and their own convenience too highly to sacrifice a particle of either for the promotion of religious knowledge among their fellow mortals, than to incur the guilt of hypocrisy by urging to others an excuse which they know and feel is not satisfactory to themselves. Indolence and indifference are bad enough; but surely insincerity is worse.

It is to be hoped however, that the number of those among Unitarians who feel or affect this indifference to the progress of religious truth among mankind at large, is not very great; and that it is becoming smaller every day. It is believed that not a few are ready and willing to co-operate in the promotion of the knowledge of divine things among their brethren; and only wait to be shown an opportunity of doing so, and a mode by which they may be enabled to carry their pious and benevolent purposes into effect. Several circumstances simultaneously occurring, give us reason to suppose that such is the case. To such persons a few hints and practical suggestions may perhaps be of service. We shall endeavour to point out, in the next Bible Christian, the means which appear to us most likely to be successful.

R.

---

## NATIONAL PREJUDICES OF THE ANCIENT JEWS.

---

THE New Testament frequently gives us intimation that the Jews in the time of our Saviour looked down with sovereign contempt on the Gentile nations; and held them in complete abhorrence. "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Matt. xviii. 17. Avoid his society as your countrymen do that of heathens and publicans; whose intimacy was considered as disgraceful and scandalous. St. Paul in his address to the multitude at Jerusalem, told them that Christ had said unto him, "Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." "And they gave him audience," says the writer of the narrative, "unto this word: and then lifted up their voices and said, 'Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live!' And they cried out, and east off their clothes, and threw dust

into the air." Acts xxii. 21. Their character is briefly described by St. Paul in 1 Thess. ii. 15. "They were contrary unto all men."

It is at all times a curious and interesting subject of research, and sometimes a very important one, to trace the coincidences between the accounts given by the writers of the New Testament and Profane Authors, concerning facts which come equally under the observation of both. The learned and judicious Lardner has collected together a number of passages from Jewish and Heathen writers, which directly or indirectly confirm the accounts given by the Apostles of our Lord. The following extracts, however, which strikingly corroborate their assertions respecting the national prejudices of the ancient Jews, I do not recollect to have seen in his valuable pages.—

Tacitus, in the 5th Book of his History, speaks of "the hostile hatred of the Jews against all other men." "*Adversus omnes alios hostile odium.*" This is precisely equivalent to the declaration of St. Paul, that they were "contrary unto all men:" and the words are almost the same.

Diodorus Siculus says, "The Jews are the only people who refuse all friendly intercourse with every other nation, and esteem all mankind as enemies." This accounts for their indignation on hearing the Apostle affirm that he had been divinely commissioned to preach to the Gentiles.

I do not bring forward these extracts as of any peculiar importance; for the circumstance which they mention is so well known from other sources, that it is become perfectly trite. But as illustrations of an argument which has great weight in support of the genuineness of the New Testament, they are not without value. The argument may thus be stated in general terms. There is reason to believe that the Books of the New Testament were written by the persons and at the times to which they are commonly referred; because all the accounts which they contain of the manners, feelings, and usages of the period which they embrace, are agreeable to the testimony of other histories, acknowledged to be authentic; and this in many particulars which would probably have escaped the notice of falsifiers in succeeding times.

INDAGATOR.



## ON THE IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF FAITH.

THE Orthodox accuse us of a want of Faith; and we must allow that there is a melancholy deficiency of that rational trust in the providence of God, which the Scriptures encourage us to feel, called faith. Certainly, true faith, Christian faith, has but little activity in the minds of many men. I do not mean the faith of words—shown in expressions of our own unworthiness, and in exclamations about throwing ourselves on Christ's atoning blood, which some say are essential to our salvation,—not that faith which makes good works of no avail,—not that wild, incoherent faith, which is considered as sufficient to supersede all moral responsibility: but that holy faith, founded on a rational confidence in the government of an omniscient, benevolent Being, which in meek submission to his will, bends to the chastening hand of his providence, and finds good in every affliction; which in the clouds and fury of the whirlwind, and in the stealthy, unseen march of the noisome pestilence, can brave these terrors, and to whatever may befall not only submits, but submits with perfect reliance on the ever during goodness of the parent of the universe.

It is not my purpose to enter at present into that wide subject, the existence of evil; although I am confident, that in the general question, its nature and object are capable of a satisfactory solution: however many of its details may remain perplexed and mysterious.—Yet this, I think, will be admitted by all, that there is a God; that he is good and kind; that he is unchangeable; and having made all things good, he necessarily supports and governs all for the production of the greatest happiness of all; that, therefore, whatever takes place, however noxious or inexplicable it be, will and *can* produce nothing but good to the world.

Much has happened within the past year which requires this pure light of faith, to view without doubt and distrust. We have seen a bold and noble nation rising to reclaim its withheld rights, and resisting the iron oppression of a despotic tyrant, manfully braving all the miseries and hardships of war, for the recovery of its dearest rights—the rights of freemen.

We have seen this noble people standing forth unheeded and unsuccoured—enduring all for the cause of liberty ; and at last overpowered and crushed under the overwhelming might of a furious despot,—their sons banished in thousands, to people a desolate and barren waste, and their daughters degraded and debased, by the defiling touch of lawless violence. Without the fullest confidence in the overruling providence of a good Being, our feelings, on this miserable result of the struggle, would be those of the most unhappy kind. But *we* know that however inexplicable and mysterious such acts at present appear, God is too just and righteous a judge not to bring good out of seeming evil. That such good will come, we have not a doubt, however it may not now be apparent to us.

We have heard also of the devastation of an entire island in the West Indies, by whirlwind and storm. That many lives and vast property should have been thus lost,—as it were by the direct agency of God,—seems to us as inexplicable as it is fearful. But that it has been permitted for some good and beneficent purpose, who, believing in the omniscience of a good Being, can doubt ?

And now, with the much dreaded pestilence in our cities, walking at noon-day, and wasting in darkness, who does not feel that God indeed is present in our streets, and evident in our homes ?

Why these things should have been permitted we cannot tell.—Truly are His ways past finding out, and His judgments a mighty deep. To the unenlightened mind, these occurrences must suggest ideas of a fearful and terrific character.—To us, I trust, though they be inexplicable, they are not fearful. Christian faith and Christian faith alone can harmonise them with the perfect goodness of God. Resting therefore, on that faith, we may have still that peace of mind which passeth all understanding. This, the Christian Scriptures alone can give. Let us study them, and they will lead us into still clearer and more satisfactory evidences of the goodness of our Almighty Father.

But how will the unbeliever, who has no faith, and the fanatic who has a false one, view these dispensations ? Let us consider first, the feelings with which the unbeliever must view the ravages of this unknown

and much dreaded pestilence. Perhaps he sees busy cities depopulated; grass growing in the streets; the marts of commerce deserted; thousands snatched at once from life, liberty, and enjoyment, and in a few short hours, stretched in stiff and stark inanity,—and the dead left to bury the dead. The husband ruthlessly torn from the wife of his bosom; her left with her little ones, that had been as the tendrils of the vine,—without one to help them, either to be hurried off in their turn, or to perish by the slow hand of disease and famine. Or, perhaps, she also is taken, and her orphans left to the inattentive world, to drag on a miserable existence by the chance supply of charity. Loved ones are snatched from our sides, and children are seen dropping from the arms of their adoring parents. In the general desolation all the active business of life is at a stand,—man knows not his fellow,—hundreds flee from the place where moves the pestilence that “walketh in darkness,” and charity herself grows cold and unfeeling! To this is added the personal dread of death, of going to the undiscovered country—and the horror of being swallowed into that uncertain future, of which his dark-sighted philosophy affords but a dim dissatisfying idea! All these, he will say, are, surely, evidences of a ruthless fate, rather than of a benevolent, omniscient power. Alas! miserable man, short-sighted mortal; he sees but the surface, and thinks not of a being more exalted than himself. Cause enough, he thinks, for him to be miserable, when nothing but unmixed misery is presented to his eyes.

But we leave him, to turn to the dark and moody fanatic. The same scenes are presented to his views, and what are his thoughts? He believes in a God, but how is he consoled by such a reflection? How can he answer the wretched unbeliever? What confidence does he himself feel, and what consolation can he bestow? He can only tell of a wrathful God who thus afflicts his creatures, to slake his vengeance,—who, abhorring the iniquities of the nations, thus in an especial manner, displays his wrath. “But,” exclaims the unhappy infidel, “this being you describe has more the attributes of a Demon than those of a good and benign governor!” The fanatic still speaks of his God’s anger and justice. (Justice!) Alas for his theology!

Alas for such views of the all wise and all good Parent, who does not willingly afflict his children! Neither have learned to see beyond their own finite natures.

One believes in a changeable Being who has unbounded power, and who uses that power for a vengeful, vindictive end;—the other, renouncing such false and dreadful ideas of an omnipotent Intelligence, seeks satisfaction, rather in total disbelief, than in contradicting his own better nature and moral judgment.

But how views the Bible Christian these dispensations? what strength or consolation does his religion afford him? He certainly witnesses much general, and much individual misery and affliction; but he knows that there is a God of love and compassion presiding over all, and though clouds and darkness surround his throne, yet he, in perfect, unwavering confidence, rests assured that all things will work together for good. It is the "pure in heart" that shall "see God"—shall see him in the bounties of his creation, the care of his dependent creatures, and his never-ceasing beneficence. Such only can see the justice and even mercy of his dispensations, and discern,—

——seeming evil still educing good,  
And better still, and better thence again  
In infinite progression!

But he has been a severe sufferer; perhaps he has lost a beloved one in the general havoc; the wife of his affection has been torn from him. How does he bear his affliction? Does he madly curse his lot like the wretched infidel, or stand terrified and in abject horror, fearing the judgment of a vengeful being, like the fanatic? Let us watch him in his closet. We hear no repining or lamentation. His eyes, no doubt, are suffused with tears, but raised, as if to pierce the Heavens, and see her whom he had loved on earth, among the spirits made perfect. There, also, he humbly hopes to meet her to part no more. He bows his knees; listen to his prayer—"Merciful Father!" he exclaims, "thou hast seen fit to afflict me, yet grant to thy servant, O God! the consolations of thy holy Gospel. May I feel and know that it is good to be afflicted, and that thou hast ordained such affliction in mercy to wean me from this world, and for thy own good purposes, for nothing happens without thy permission. Resting on this conviction, may I have

enlarged faith, and implicit confidence in thy decrees, and even though thou slay me, yet shall I trust in thee."

This would be the feeling and the language of a faithful believer in the Gospel,—of one who had read and felt the word with the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind. He is grateful that his Maker has yet spared him,—has yet given him time to improve his mind, to exalt his intellect, and to strive yet more after glory, honour, and immortality.

But for what end is he preserved? Surely not to waste his time in idle listlessness, and careless indifference to the claims of those around him. No, he goes forth "a sadder, yet a wiser man;" and strives to assist and improve his poorer neighbours. And with what purity does consolation flow from his lips? With what true, natural feelings, does he recount the mercies of God to those who are in like affliction, and pour balm into their wounded spirits!

If such be his, such also must be our duties. God does nothing in vain. Some beneficent end will eventually proceed from all the decrees of his Providence, whether from the turbulence of war,—the tremendous hurricane, or the wasting pestilence. If we cannot see this good end now, it nevertheless is to be,—it assuredly will come. Believing this, may we not, even now, find good as the result of the disease that is raging amongst us?

I would point to the state of ignorance and immorality in which the great mass of our people is living. Until this epidemic came among us, we scarcely knew, and little heeded the condition of our poor. We have discovered them wicked, vicious, and unhappy. We find that their temporal condition could not be worse, and that their future happiness is endangered by our neglect and carelessness. But we see that *our* existence is linked with theirs; that we are parts in the chain of the physical as well as moral world; and, that whatever injures or improves them, affects our condition also.

Should these things be remedied; should our people be raised in the scale of intellectual beings, and become moral, industrious, and happy, we think the Cholera will have come as a blessing. Something of this startling, terrifying influence was needed. We were deaf to their cries, and dead to their claims. We have been



aroused as with the voice of the destroying angel, and a righteous retribution, the natural consequence of immorality, is effecting, I hope, the reformation of the world. Fear, however, is the chief stimulant. We are governed more by fear than love,—more by a dread of temporal consequences, than a fear of not doing our duty to our neighbour. However, this seasonable fear may work, and is working, much, very much good. But still more is yet to be accomplished; and to follow it is incumbent on us as citizens, and still more as Christians; for, as the apostle asks,—“he that loveth not his own brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?”

We have suggested only one out of many good results that will spring from this fearful epidemic. But even this is of mighty moment, as it concerns our duties here as men and citizens, and involves the temporal rights and necessities, as well as the spiritual, and perhaps eternal, happiness of the great mass of our people. We have been lax and deficient. We see our duty now, and if we do not each strive to perform it, we are knowingly guilty in the sight both of man and of God. We should then, according to our several capacities, seek to perform this end of our existence, and afford the best means of forwarding this good work. Let the wealthy give their money, the active their exertions, and the pious their prayers. The pressing wants of the poor will, we hope, draw the attention of our government, and acts be passed to provide for our destitute and distressed. But much will remain to be done not possible to be reached by an Act of Parliament, or which Acts of Parliament have rather thwarted and retarded than forwarded and urged on,—we mean the intellectual improvement of our people, their advancement in morals, character, and conduct. This is the most important, as it would tend more than anything else to do away with vice and misery. Let us then strive to educate, both by precept and example, the poor around us: to show by our own lives and actions, of what importance morals and good conduct would be to them. And then, if either by Cholera or by any other means, God sees fit to call us hence, may we be found neither barren nor unfruitful, but hear the merciful decree of our God,—“Well done good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.”

*Cork.*

*O.*

# OBJECTIONS TO UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY CONSIDERED.

BY W. E. CHANNING, D. D.

(*Concluded from page 321.*)

We pass to another writer, who was one of the brightest ornaments of the Church of England and of the age in which he lived, Dr. Samuel Clarke. In classical literature and in metaphysical speculation, Dr. Clarke has a reputation which needs no tribute at our hands. His sermons are an invaluable repository of Scriptural criticism; and his work on the evidences of natural and revealed religion has ever been considered as one of the ablest vindications of our common faith. This great man was a Unitarian. He believed firmly that Jesus was a distinct being from his Father; and a derived and dependent being; and he desired to bring the liturgy of his church into a correspondence with these doctrines.

To those who are acquainted with the memorable infidel controversy in the early part of the last century, excited by the writings of Bolingbroke, Tindal, Morgan, Collins, and Chubb, it will be unnecessary to speak of the zeal and power with which the Christian cause was maintained by learned Unitarians. But we must pass over these to recall a man, whose memory is precious to enlightened believers—we mean Lardner, that most patient and successful advocate of Christianity; who has written, we believe, more largely than any other author on the evidences of the gospel; from whose works later authors have drawn as from a treasure-house; and whose purity and mildness have disarmed the severity and conciliated the respect of men of very different views from his own. Lardner was a Unitarian.—Next to Lardner, the most laborious advocate of Christianity against the attacks of infidels, in our own day, was Priestley; and whatever we may think of some of his opinions, we believe that none of his opposers ever questioned the importance of his vindications of our common faith. We certainly do not say too much, when we affirm that Unitarians have not been surpassed by any denomination in zealous, substantial service to the Christian cause. Yet we are told that Unitarianism leads to infidelity. We

are reproached with defection from that religion round which we have gathered in the day of its danger, and from which, we trust, persecution and death cannot divorce us.

It is indeed said, that instances have occurred of persons, who, having given up the Trinitarian doctrine, have not stopped there, but have resigned one part of Christianity after another, until they have become thorough infidels. To this we answer, that such instances we have never known; but that such should occur is not improbable, and is what we should even expect, for it is natural that, when the mind has detected one error in its creed, it should distrust every other article, and should exchange its blind and hereditary assent for a sweeping scepticism. We have examples of this truth at the present moment, both in France and Spain, where multitudes have proceeded from rejecting Popery to absolute Atheism. Now who of us will argue that the Catholic faith is true, because multitudes who relinquished it have also cast away every religious principle and restraint; and if the argument be not sound on the side of Popery, how can it be pressed into the service of Trinitarianism? The fact is, that false and absurd doctrines, when exposed, have a natural tendency to beget scepticism in those who received them without reflection,—none are so likely to believe too little as those who have begun with believing too much; and hence we charge upon Trinitarianism whatever tendency may exist in those who forsake it, to sink gradually into infidelity.

Unitarianism does not lead to infidelity. On the contrary, its excellence is that it fortifies faith. Unitarianism is Christianity stripped of those corrupt additions which shock reason and our moral feelings. It is a rational and amiable system, against which no man's understanding, or conscience, or charity, or piety revolts. Can the same be said of that system, which teaches the doctrines of three equal persons in one God, of natural and total depravity, of infinite atonement, of special and electing grace, and of the everlasting misery of the non-elected part of mankind? We believe that, unless Christianity be purified from these corruptions, it will not be able to bear the unsparing scrutiny to which the progress of society is exposing it.

We believe that it must be reformed, or intelligent men will abandon it. As the friends of Christianity, and the foes of infidelity, we are therefore solicitous to diffuse what seem to us nobler and juster views of this divine system.

7. It was our purpose to consider one more objection to our views, viz. that they give no consolation in sickness and death. But we have only time to express amazement at such a charge. What! a system which insists with a peculiar energy on the pardoning mercy of God, on his universal and parental love, and on the doctrine of a resurrection and immortality—such a system unable to give comfort? It unlocks infinite springs of consolation and joy, and gives to him who practically receives it, a living, overflowing, and unspeakable hope. Its power to sustain the soul in death has been often tried; and did we believe dying men to be inspired, or that peace and hope in the last hours were God's seal to the truth of doctrines, we should be able to settle at once the controversy about Unitarianism. A striking example of the power of this system in disarming death, was lately given by a young minister in a neighbouring town,\* known to many of our readers, and singularly endeared to his friends by eminent Christian virtue. He was smitten by sickness in the midst of a useful and happy life, and sunk slowly to the grave. His religion, and it was that which has now been defended, gave habitual peace to his mind, and spread a sweet smile over his pale countenance. He retained his faculties to his last hour; and when death came, having left pious counsel to the younger members of his family, and expressions of gratitude to his parents, he breathed out life in the language of Jesus 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' Such was the end of one, who held, with unwavering faith, the great principles which we have here advanced; and yet our doctrine has no consolation, we are told, for sickness and death!

We have thus endeavoured to meet objections commonly urged against our views of religion; and we have done this, not to build up a party, but to promote views of Christianity which seem to us particularly

---

\* Rev. John E. Abbott, of Salem. This tract was first published in 1819, in 'The Christian Disciple.'

suiting to strengthen men's faith in it, and to make it fruitful of good works and holy lives. Christian virtue, Christian holiness, love to God and man, these are all which we think worth contending for, and these we believe to be intimately connected with the system now maintained. If in this we err, may God discover our error and disappoint our efforts. We ask no success but what he may approve—no proselytes but such as will be made better, purer, happier, by the adoption of our views.

---

### ON PREDESTINATION.

*(Concluded from page 274.)*

---

“Thus far I have shown you the nature of this popular representation of the thoughts and actions of the divine being; and made it, I hope, clearly to appear, that, though counsels and subsequent decrees are ascribed to God, yet his wisdom is equivalent, or superior to them all;—that consultations can be ascribed to him, in no other than a figurative sense;—and that, though he cannot be undetermined, one moment, in his purposes and designs, yet his decrees are of a very different nature from the decrees of the wisest senate, or mightiest monarch upon earth.

“But this matter deserves to be considered yet further; for, by tracing the language to its first rise, we shall take the most likely method to come at the knowledge of the things, which are thereby signified. In doing this, it will be very proper to consider the rise and original of such language, in general; and how such phrases and expressions came to be applied to Christians in particular.

“1. As to the rise and original of such language in general; this is so justly represented, and so well expressed by Mr. Locke,\* that I cannot do better than quote his words.

“It may lead us a little towards the original of all our notions and knowledge, if we remark how great a dependence our words have on common, sensible ideas; and how those, which are made use of, to stand for actions and notions, quite removed from sense, have

---

\* Essay on the Human Understanding, Book iii. Chap. 1. Sec. 5.



their rise from thence, and from obvious, sensible ideas are transferred to more abstruse significations, and made to stand for ideas which come not under the cognizance of our senses, v. g. to imagine, apprehend, comprehend, adhere, conceive, instil, disgust, disturbance, tranquillity, &c. are all words taken from the operations of sensible things, and applied to certain modes of thinking. Spirit, in its primary signification, is breath; angel, a messenger. And, I doubt not, but, if we could trace them to their sources, we should find, in all languages, the names, which stand for things, that fall not under our senses, to have had their first rise from sensible ideas; by which we may give some kind of guess, what kind of notions they were, and whence derived, which filled their minds, who were the first beginners of languages; and how nature, even in the naming of things, unawares suggested to men the originals and principles of all their knowledge; whilst, to give names, that might make known, to others, any operations they felt in themselves, or any other ideas, that came not under their senses, they were fain to borrow words from ordinary known ideas of sensation, by that mean to make others the more easily to conceive those operations, they experimented in themselves, which made no outward sensible appearances. And then, when they had got known and agreed names, to signify those internal operations of their own minds, they were sufficiently furnished to make known by words, all their other ideas; since they could consist of nothing, but either of outward sensible perceptions, or of the inward operations of their minds about them. We having, as has been proved, no ideas at all, but what originally come either from sensible objects without, or what we feel within ourselves,—from the inward workings of our own spirits, of which we are conscious to ourselves within.'

"To this clear and just account of Mr. Locke's, I need only add, that, whoever carefully considers the words made use of upon this subject, [such as to consult, or deliberate, to know, or foreknow, to decree, or determine, or prædestinate and prædetermine, and the like,] will find that they take their rise, either from sensation or reflection: that is, from external objects, or from the operations of our own minds; and from whichever of these two sources they originally proceed, they ought

not, without great caution, and only in the highest and most sublime sense to which we can exalt them, to be ascribed to the ever-blessed God. Otherwise we shall not think or speak of him with that reverence and justness which becomes us, when we think or speak of the most perfect being.

“II. I am to show how such phrases and expressions came to be applied to God’s gracious designs, concerning Christians in particular.

“As human language about common affairs, takes its rise from sensation and reflection; so doeth the language of Holy Scripture. For that is no other than the popular language applied to religious matters. The way for us to become acquainted with the divine being, and with the things of another world, is not by looking upon them immediately, and as they are in themselves; but by comparing them to things, which we already see or know. For even the gospel, which is the most perfect revelation of the mind and will of God, gives men no new simple ideas;\* it only represents things unseen and unknown, by comparing them to things with which men were well acquainted before. The language of Scripture, therefore, is, like that in common use, adapted to the present circumstances and notions of mankind, and by that mean it is calculated to do the most good.

“But there are other reasons, why the expressions made use of concerning this subject, are, in the New Testament, applied to Christians; such as follow,—

“Long before the coming of Christ, the heathen world revolted from the true God to the service of idols and false gods, and therefore they were reprobated or rejected.

“But the nation of the Jews were chosen, and separated from that corrupt mass, to be the people of God, and to be holy unto the Lord; and therefore they went under such titles or denominations as these, the children,\* or sons of God; born of God, or his first-born;† the saints;‡ the holy people;§ a kingdom of priests; a

\* I do not mean by this that there is nothing discovered by revelation, but what human reason might of itself have found out. No; I am satisfied that revelation has made several new discoveries, or given us several new complex ideas; though I do not apprehend that it has given us any new simple ideas.

\* Deut. xiv. 1. † Exod. iv. 22. Hos. xi. 1. ‡ Deut. xxxiii. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Psal. xvi. 3. and l. 5. and cxlix. 1, 5, 9. § Deut.

chosen or holy seed;|| the elect;¶ the called;\*\* the people of God;†† a peculiar people;‡‡ the Lord's inheritance, or the lot of his inheritance;§§ holy and beloved;||| and the like.¶¶

“Now the Gospel having the most strict connection with the books of the Old Testament, where these phrases frequently occur; and our Lord and his Apostles being native Jews, and beginning to preach first in Judea, or within the borders of the land of Israel; the language in which they preached would of course abound with the idioms and phrases of the Jewish nation. And these being the phrases well known from their common use among the Jews, when the Messiah came; it is easy to see why such of that nation, as refused to believe and obey him, came under the denomination of the reprobated or rejected. For they no longer continued to be the people of God; and, therefore, they had no more the former appellations given them. Whereas these honourable names and titles were continued unto all such Jews as embraced Christianity; and, upon embracing the Christian religion their privileges were increased.

“Nay, further; besides the subjects of the Messiah's kingdom, who were originally of the Jewish nation; it was the decree or purpose of God, from the beginning, instead of the unbelieving Jews, to take for his people, under the Messiah, all such of the Gentiles as would embrace the Gospel; and, as the Jewish nation, generally, or in a body, rejected the Messiah, they who had, till then, been the people of God, were in a body rejected; for refusing him whom God had sent to be their king and deliverer.

---

vii. 6. and xiv. 2, 21. || Exod. xix. 6. and xxxiii. 13. Deut. iv. 34, 37. and x. 15. Is. vi. 13. and lxi. 9. ¶ All the nation of Israel, including both good and bad, were called the elect and chosen of God. Besides the texts above, see 1 Kings, iii. 8. Ps. cv. 6, 43. and cvi. 5. Is. xli. 8, 9. and xliii. 20, 21. and xlv. 4. and lxxv. 9, 22. Jer. xxxiii. 24. \*\* Isa. xlviii. 12. †† Judg. xx. 2. 2 Sam. xiv. 13. ‡‡ Exod. xix. 5. Deut. xiv. 2. and xxvi. 18. Psal. cxxxv. 4. §§ Deu. iv. 20. and ix. 26,—29. and xxxii. 9. ||| Psal. lx. 5. and cviii. 6. ¶¶ It appears to me to be a very remarkable confirmation of the account which is here given of the rise and occasion of this sort of phrases;—that pious and virtuous men, or the people of God, were never called his elect, or chosen people, for 1500 years, and more, from the creation. The choosing and separating the nation of Israel from the other nations, who were sunk into idolatry and vice, gave the first occasion to this sort of language. And as the separating the Christians from the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, was a similar event, it is no wonder that it should be spoken of in like words and phrases.

"The small remnant of the Jewish nation that embraced the gospel, were received into the kingdom of God, which he graciously erected under his own son the Messiah ; and so they continued to be his people, along with the converted Gentiles, who, all together, made now the Church and people of God.

"And, as the Jewish nation, before the coming of Christ, so the Jewish and Gentile Christians after his coming, had the names of the elect, or chosen people of God ; and the other appellations which had formerly belonged to the nation of the Jews. And, together with such high and honourable names, they were likewise, by the free grace of God, entitled unto all the privileges of the chosen people of God ; and nothing but their own wickedness and apostacy, could cut them off from such honours and advantages.

"As God had determined, from the beginning, to take the Gentiles to be his people under the Messiah, together with the believing Jews ; and not only purposed it in his own mind, but foretold it also, by many of the ancient prophets ; hence arose the expressions concerning his foreknowing them, and predestinating or predetermining to choose, call, justify, (or accept) them, and treat them as his children or people. But, to examine all the particular phrases or expressions, as they lie in the New Testament ; and to show from their connexion with the context, their original signification, and to what persons they properly belong, would far exceed the bounds of this letter. I have by me an examination of the texts relating to this subject, which I may, possibly, hereafter submit to your perusal. I would now observe that there is one single text, viz. 1 Cor. ix. 27. which, if rightly translated, would give the English reader a just notion of the scriptural doctrine of election and reprobation, and clearly show him that particular persons are not, in holy writ, represented, as elected, absolutely and unconditionally, to everlasting life, or predestinated absolutely and unconditionally to everlasting damnation ; but that all Christians, in general, are elected to enjoy the Christian privileges here upon earth, which, if they abuse, those very elect persons will become reprobates. The words of that text, are the words of St. Paul, concerning himself, who declared, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection ; lest, by any means, when

I have preached to others, I myself should become a reprobate.—*αὐτὸς ἀδόκιμος γίνωμαι.*" Now St. Paul was certainly a chosen vessel, an elect person, if ever there was one. And yet he declares it was possible that he himself, though an elect person, might become a reprobate. Nay, if he had not kept under his body, and brought his senses, passions and appetites in subjection to his conscience, he had actually become a reprobate; though he had been so long an elect person, a Christian, and an Apostle; and though he had preached to others, and been the mean of the salvation of multitudes.

"I would further observe, before I conclude, that the decrees of God are some of them absolute, and others conditional.

"Concerning the inanimate parts of the creation, they are absolute. That the sun, moon, and stars should be placed at such a distance, and move within such and such orbits, or finish their various revolutions in certain fixed periods of time;—these things are according to the absolute and unconditional decrees of God, and therefore, they of themselves, can never vary; because what he has so determined, he himself, by his own mighty power, doth actually bring to pass; for who can resist his will? But should he always determine, and act, after the same manner, with creatures, indued with intelligence and agency, he would destroy their very make and constitution, and treat them (not like what they are, but) like what they are not, that is, like mere stocks and stones, who have no understanding or agency at all;—a thing which infinite wisdom can never do!

"Again; with respect to creatures indued with intelligence and moral agency, God may justly be considered in two different views, viz. as creator, original proprietor, and Lord of all; or as their moral governor and judge.\*

"In the first of these views, God, as sovereign Lord, and original proprietor of all, dispenses his gifts, or favours, to his creatures, with perfect wisdom; but by no rules, or methods of proceeding, that we are acquainted with. The time when he creates us, or brings us into a state of trial; the country we shall live in; the parents we shall descend from; our constitution of body, or peculiar turn of mind; our riches or poverty, our

---

\* See Mr. Foster's Sermons, vol. iii. sermon 1.



good and liberal, or disadvantageous education; the scene of tranquillity or afflictions we are to pass through; these and other circumstances are, (I doubt not) appointed with perfect wisdom, but by rules that lie quite out of our sight.

“Whereas the divine rules, or methods of proceeding, with regard to us, when God is considered as our governor and judge, are clearly revealed, and perfectly well known, viz. That we are here in a state of trial; and that, as we now sow, so shall we afterwards reap: that we shall finally be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and receive rewards or punishments, in the state of retribution, in an exact proportion to our behaviour in this state of trial.

“The decrees of God, therefore, concerning the future state of mankind, appear to me to be evidently conditional. For, without repentance, faith, and holiness, no man can see the Lord. And no man, who is penitent, believing, and holy, (as far as I can learn from the whole Scriptural account) shall be condemned, or miss of salvation. These, therefore, are the terms and conditions, on which God has decreed to make us happy, by the mediation of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and, without which, he has decreed, we shall not be happy.

Considered in this view, his præscience, or prædetermination, doth not in the least, clash with his being a lawgiver, ruler, and judge. And, if you suppose him to have determined an affair of such consequence, according to the counsel of his own will, it can only mean, that he did not resolve upon it rashly or precipitantly; that it was not the effect of humor, caprice, or passion; but of wisdom and goodness. Though, therefore, he has declared, that ‘he has mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and hardens whom he pleases.’ Yet his is not the will of an arbitrary, capricious, or tyrannical being. He wills or resolves upon nothing but what is infinitely wise and good; and therefore his will is a most proper rule and measure of judgment. He will show mercy (as he has assured us) to none but the penitent, and harden none but such as remain impenitent and incorrigible, after sufficient means have been tried upon them; and such, indeed, he leaves to themselves, as parents abandon hopeless and incorrigible children. And, if any man should ask, ‘Why he will not save the

wicked, and harden the pious and well-disposed? Might he not justly answer; 'I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy; and whom I see proper, I will harden or punish?'

"We are obliged, in this manner, to interpret the texts, which speak of God's determining the everlasting state of mankind; if we will understand the several passages of sacred Scripture in a perfect harmony and consistence with each other. For, there are other texts, which represent God, as waiting to see the end, and then examining into the circumstances of them; that he may act like an impartial judge, and render to every one according as his deeds have been. And, from such passages, we may learn the purity and justice of God. Like a king who loves his subjects, he wishes them all well; but is resolved to treat every one of them according to their different behaviour; and, when he has waited to see the event, and has been a witness to all that is past, he then proceeds to act as a righteous judge, making the most exact distributions of rewards and punishments, not only in kind, but also in degree.

"From these considerations we may learn to order our steps with thought and circumspection; to expect equitable treatment from him at last; and, in the mean time, to refer all the intricate mazes of providence to the clear and impartial decision of that great day. Such considerations ought to silence every murmur, and cut off all cavils. 'Nay, but, O man! who art thou that repliest against God? Hast thou considered the case as maturely? is thy wisdom equal to judge of his? or thy goodness to be compared to that of the divine being?' He knows best how to manage the creation, with every individual of it,—much better than the most skilful potter to mould his different lumps of clay.

"To conclude,—Christianity is not a matter of mere speculation, but a plain, practical religion; and, therefore, it is revealed in a familiar manner, and in popular language. The design of it is to lead sinners to repentance, and to establish righteous persons in virtue and piety. All the representations of the nature and perfections, the designs and actions of God are there made with this view. It is, therefore, to be embraced as a doctrine according to godliness; for it will teach us that good understanding, which all they have who do God's commandments.

Genesis i.—29.—“*And God said, behold I give to you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of the whole earth, and every tree, in which is fruit yielding seed to be food for yourselves.*”

The seeds of every herb we are here told were the original food of man; such are wheat, indian corn or maize, millet, rice, &c. “The herb bearing seed,” is a similar expression to the tree in which is fruit—as it is the fruit and not the tree which is given for man’s food; so the herbage of the herbs is not the food for man, but the seeds of these herbs. In verse 11 we find a proper distinction made between herbs with conspicuous seeds, and grass. A seed-bearing herb differs also from the “green herb,” mentioned in verse 30, of which succulence is the prominent and valuable property.

“*And every tree in which is fruit, &c.*—If man was to have eaten but one kind of food, and that in a state of nature or undressed, fruit is the kind best adapted for him. Fruit contains many of those substances which are easily assimilated into blood, the source of support and growth. But if men were limited to the use of ripe fruits as food, their extension over the globe would be impossible. Man flourishes where animal food makes three parts in four of his whole supply of nutriment; and lives in health, where eleven parts in twelve of the food for the year are derived from similar sources. We know that polar climates do not produce fruits in any quantity, and of that small number the greater part are the acid fruits of shrubs, well calculated indeed to answer as a condiment for a flesh-eating population, but containing only a small quantity of nutritious matter, and totally unfitted for nourishing food. Indeed, in very cold climates, it is probable that acid fruits, if attempted to be eaten as food, would be found only partially digestible, while the nutritious fruits of the tropics could not be taken to Kamtschatka in consequence of the expense. Man, even by his power of appropriating every kind of food, is marked out the universal lord of this lower world. The inhabitants of Eden probably lived on fruits and seeds, and they could do so without inconvenience, in their delicious climate, even if it were not superior to the supposed situation of the “garden of God” as now pointed out

by geographers; but of their posterity, many must find a paradise under varying skies, and with less brilliant sun-shine; and consequently the General Father has benignantly adapted them to their various circumstances, and enabled his last created to be truly a citizen of the whole world. Consistently with this fitness, we soon find mankind using animal food. We shall not lay much stress on the argument deduced from righteous Abel offering a sacrifice of flesh, because its being eaten is only a deduction. But we have direct evidence that flesh was used as food very early in the history of mankind, not only without censure, but attended by circumstances of approval. We find a distinction made between clean and unclean animals at the peopling of the ark. This I take to be a classification of those fit and unfit for food. Next follows a peremptory direction of God to Noah, see Genesis ix. 3. "Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; even as the green herb I give you them all." Even if it could be proved that vegetable food was alone to be consumed during the paradisaical æra, still when God extended the race of man he could of course enlarge his privileges to suit this extension. Man should have the means of virtuously obeying his Maker near the poles as under the tropics, and his daily food should not expediently be made a cause of offending. In Genesis xviii. 7. we find Abraham the approved of God "Taking a calf tender and good" to dress as food for angels the messengers who brought an inspired communication from God; and we find that these angels "did eat." Such was the Hebrew practice under the sanction given to Noah. But as some persons have entertained a doubt on this subject, as applies to Christians, let us, although the discussion may to many seem superfluous, dwell for a short time on what is revealed to us thereon. And first, we are entitled to dismiss from our consideration the usages of Paradise as unfit and inapplicable to our present condition; and even the law of the Hebrews from which we are set free, is not obligatory on the followers of Christ. What then, says the perfect law of liberty? Respecting food it only restricts us in those points which would lead to cruelty, to the debased manners of idolaters, and to ill health. Acts xv. 28, 29. "For it hath seemed good to the holy spirit" (that spirit of inspiration which the Apostles possessed,) "and to us," (or

their own judgment,) "to lay upon you no greater burthen than these necessary things; that ye abstain from things offered to idols, and from blood," (raw or bleeding meat,) "and from things strangled," (which were unwholesome.) Many savages eat meat raw, bleeding and warm from the animal. The Jews themselves once fell into this brutalizing practice in their fury after a battle, see 1 Samuel, xv. 32, 33. Brutality to animals is speedily transferred to men, and thus we find savages who live on raw bloody meat, frequently destroying and devouring their human enemies, and drinking their blood in their rage. Thus is made manifest the importance of humanity, because that good feeling which we exercise to the beasts that perish, will of course influence our conduct to our fellow-men.

In 1 Cor. viii. 8. we are told distinctly "that meat commendeth us not to God; for if we eat we are not the better, neither if we eat not, are we the worse." We are charged, however, not to cause other men to sin against their own consciences, to "take heed lest our liberty become a stumbling block to them that are weak," and what this liberty is which we may use but not abuse, is described to us in 1 Cor. x. 25. "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience' sake." If it be true then, that fruits and seeds as the prescribed food of man, would contract the boundary of his extension, and that many of the Mosaic institutions are only adapted to Southern and Eastern climates, a Jewish law of meats, and of clean and unclean animals, which is, in fact, but an Asiatic sanitary regulation, emanating from God himself, proves the temporary nature of these prior dispensations. Individuals, and even societies in the East, have adopted many of those regulations which the Hebrews had from the Wisest; but the Christian dispensation being general for the North and the South, the East and the West, the law of meats adapted to Judea is abrogated, the Jewish people are scattered abroad, the true servant of God may obey the Christian law at the pole as well as at Mount Sinai, and is authoritatively warned to beware of "Seducers which command to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth; for every creature of God is good and not to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving." 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4.

A LEARNING TEACHER.



## REVIEW.

1. *Questions to Believers in the Trinity.* pp. 4.
2. *Remarks on some Texts of Scripture, frequently alleged in defence of the Supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ.* By Dr. Channing. pp. 4.
3. *Scriptural Reasons for disbelieving the Doctrine of the Trinity.* By the Rev. Henry Ware, Jun. of Boston.—pp. 4.

THESE useful Tracts have been reprinted by the Belfast Unitarian Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge; and works more likely to be serviceable for the purposes for which they are wanted, could not have been selected.

The "*Questions to Believers in the Trinity*," are well deserving of being asked and answered. This tract is altered from one which appeared in England under a name somewhat similar; and the alterations which it has undergone, we consider are decided improvements. We know of no publication of the same size better calculated to attract the attention of Trinitarians to *the real nature of their own creed*. This is a most important object; for such is the self-contradiction of the system, that to *examine* it, is to *renounce*.

The Tract No. 2, by Dr. Channing, is a reprint of the note annexed by that powerful writer to his sermon on the Christian Doctrine, delivered at the ordination of Mr. Sparks, at Baltimore. It contains a solution of those difficulties which are most apt to embarrass the minds of serious enquirers when they first begin to examine the Scriptures in order to determine whether they really teach the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity. It may be said that Dr. Channing has *understated* the argument which he has handled in this publication, but this we confess appears to us to be on the whole an advantage. It shows that even granting to the Trinitarian all that with any show of justice or reason he could feel himself authorised to demand, still his texts do not prove his doctrine. The concessions of Dr. Channing to his opponents are large and liberal; but they do not invalidate his reasoning.

No. 3, is by the Rev. Henry Ware, Jun. of Boston, a gentleman who is known to many of our readers, not only by his writings but by personal intercourse, during his short visit to this country a few years ago.

Those who are acquainted with his character will at once anticipate the manner and style in which his "*Scriptural Reasons for disbelieving the Doctrine of the Trinity*" are advanced:—serious, calm, earnest, and impressive:—and they will not be disappointed. The mildness of truth and the meekness of Christianity characterise this little publication. It contains in a short compass, an excellent outline of the argument for the sole Divinity of God the Father: and as such we recommend it both to the persons who receive and to those who impugn that important doctrine. This tract has never before been reprinted on this side of the Atlantic; and it is thought that the only copy of the Address from which it is extracted, that has found its way into Ireland, is the one which has been used for this republication. It will therefore possess the interest of novelty in addition to its other claims.

There is nothing in the "*getting up*" of these Tracts of which we more decidedly approve, than the cheapness at which they are enabled to be sold. Each of them may be had at the low price of one half-penny; and persons disposed to purchase any considerable quantity may have them at a still more unexpensive rate. It will thus be in the power of almost every person of ordinary income who may wish to aid in the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge, to do so at a very trifling cost. Let him purchase a few hundred of these excellent little publications, and distribute them among his friends and neighbours; both those who embrace and those who disbelieve the opinions which they are intended to uphold. No minister ought to preach a controversial discourse on the Doctrine of the Trinity without having previously procured a supply of these tracts for distribution among his auditory; and if the subject of the sermon be handled in a mode somewhat analogous to the method pursued in them, they will be doubly serviceable by suggesting the arguments and illustrations employed by the preacher, when they would otherwise be in danger of fading from the memory. To missionary preachers, when such may be sent forth, to labour in the hitherto uncultivated fields of the North of Ireland, they will prove powerful auxiliaries; and in the mean time, may to a certain extent supply their place.

If the Unitarian Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge continues to supply the province of Ulster with publications, breathing a similar spirit to that which pervades the little tracts which are enumerated at the head of this article, it will deserve success; and it will succeed. R.

---

#### REVIEW.

*Bible Stories, for the use of Children.* Part II.—Containing Stories from the NEW TESTAMENT.—By the REV. SAMUEL WOOD, B. A.

TOWARDS the conclusion of our second year we directed the attention of our readers to the Bible Stories taken from the Old Testament, and we are glad to learn, that our recommendation was not without effect. We have heard of several individuals, and some of them entertaining religious views different from our own, who have expressed their warm approbation of the I. PART of Mr. Wood's Bible Stories. We have now much pleasure in introducing the II. PART to the Irish public; and we give it as our decided opinion, that a more useful little volume could not be put into the hands of children. It is quite free of every sectarian feeling, and is interspersed with a number of *notes*, which may be useful to many parents as well as children. The *reflections* are brief, natural, and useful. We are not aware of any volumes which are better entitled to occupy a shelf in the libraries of day and Sunday schools. Mr. Wood has our unqualified approbation for his valuable labours; and we now present our readers with a story from his second volume.

#### THE PROPHECY CONCERNING THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

(Matthew xxiv. 1—44.)

WHEN Jesus was come out, and was going away from the temple, his disciples came to him, to show him the buildings of the temple. Jesus said unto them, "See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, his disciples came unto him privately, saying, "Tell us when these things shall be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age." Jesus answered and said unto them, "Take heed that no man deceive you; for many will come in my name, saying, 'I am

the Christ,' and will deceive many. And ye will hear of wars, and rumours of wars. See that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. Yet all these are but the beginnings of sorrows. For they will deliver you up to be afflicted, and will kill you; and ye will be hated by all nations on my account. And then will many fall off from their faith, and betray one another, and hate one another. Many false teachers also will arise, and will deceive many. And because iniquity will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he that endureth to the end, shall be saved. And these good tidings of the kingdom of heaven shall be proclaimed throughout all the world, for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come.

"When therefore ye shall see the abomination of desolation,\* spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing on holy ground," (whoso readeth, let him attend!) "then let them that are in Judæa flee into the mountains. Let him that is on the house top,† not come down to take any thing out of his house, neither let him that is in the field, return back to take his clothes. And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabbath-day, for then will be great tribulation, such as hath not been seen since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be. And unless those days shall be shortened, not a soul shall be left alive; but for the sake of the elect (that is, the Christians,) those days shall be shortened.

"Then, if any man shall say unto you, 'Lo, here is the Christ!' or 'there!' believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false teachers, who shall work great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, 'Behold he is in the desert,' go not forth; 'Behold, he is in the sacred chambers,' believe it not. For, as the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even to the West, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

[The meaning of the two last sentences is, that the ruin would extend throughout all the land, and that, wherever the Jews were to be found, there would the destroying armies of the Romans follow and overtake them.]

"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the land mourn, when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he will send his messengers with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heaven to the other.

\* This means the desolating Roman armies, or perhaps the Roman standards, which had images at the top of them abominated by the Jews, because worship was sometimes paid to them.

† The Jewish houses had flat roofs, fit for walking on; and they had also stairs on the outside of them from the ground to the top, so that a person who was on the roof, and wished to make his escape, might do so by means of these stairs, without going into the house at all.

“ Now learn a parable of the fig-tree. When its branch is become tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise, when ye shall see all these things, know that the Son of Man is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and that hour knoweth no one, no, not even the angels in heaven, but my Father only.

“ But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as, in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not, till the flood came and swept them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. Watch, therefore, for you know not at what hour your Lord will come. Ye are sure that if the master of the house knew at what time of the night the thief would come, he would watch, and not suffer his house to be broken into. Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at such an hour as ye think not.”

---

All that our Lord here foretells came to pass. The Roman armies laid siege to Jerusalem, and destroyed it so completely, that no part of the walls was left. Most of its wicked inhabitants perished with it; but many of those who believed in Christ, took timely warning by what he had said, and made their escape. Who is there that could have foreseen all this by his own wisdom? He who *did* foresee it must have been instructed by God himself, who knows all things.

---

## Intelligence.

### BIGOTRY AT ITS WORK AGAIN.

WE hardly expect to be believed when we inform our readers, that Mr. Cromie, of Portstewart, the landlord of a great many of the members of the newly erected Remonstrant Congregation, in Ballymoney, has refused to allow his tenantry to obtain stones from his quarry, for the purpose of building a house for the worship of God. Such however is the fact.

The Remonstrant Congregation has been obliged since it was first formed into a worshipping society, to assemble on the Lord's day in the loft of a grain store, which has been fitted up as a temporary meeting-house. The members feeling themselves sufficiently numerous and united to commence the building of a more permanent and commodious place of worship, sent forward a deputation, consisting of the Rev. Mr. Osborne and another gentleman, requesting Mr. Cromie to allow them



to procure stone for the erection—but to their no small surprise, and to his great disgrace—they met with an absolute refusal. The only reason assigned by Mr. Cromie was, that “he could not conscientiously allow stone to *Arians*.” He intimated that as he had already made up his mind on the subject, there was no use in farther urging their request. With this reply the Deputation of course were obliged to be satisfied.

Here then is a member of the Protestant Church, which professes to be founded on the right of private judgment, refusing, not his support, for that was not asked—not his countenance, for that was not expected—but simply a common and customary accommodation to persons who sought that accommodation, merely that they might be enabled to assemble in a decent and suitable building, to worship the God who is a spirit, and who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth—in the only mode of which their consciences approve. The stone in the quarry is of no use to Mr. Cromie: the removal of it does not leave him by one doit a poorer man: permission to take it for purposes connected with the improvement of the estate or the convenience of the tenantry has hitherto been freely bestowed by Mr. Cromie, as we are sure it would be by every other landlord in the island; but the creed of the present applicants does not square precisely with Mr. Cromie’s; and therefore he refuses.

Here again is a member of the Protestant Church established by law, which derives so much of its support from *tithes*, the produce of the industry of Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, and Dissenters of various denominations; here is he withholding not a pecuniary contribution, but *an act of ordinary courtesy*, which would have cost him nothing, when that act would have proved a convenience and accommodation to Christians of another communion. Truly the members of the Church of England will feel little obliged to Mr. Cromie for the plea of *conscience*, which he has in this instance set up in his defence. If the conscience of a member of the Church of England will not allow him to permit a body of Dissenters to remove a few valueless stones, in order to build a meeting-house, perhaps Dissenters may begin to ask themselves whether *their conscience* (for they have consciences too) ought to allow them to contribute of their skill, capital, and industry, in the form of tithes, to the support of the

Church of England; a church from which they are Dissenters, only because they believe her doctrine, discipline, and worship, to be at variance with the word of God. Now if the Presbyterians of the North were to ask themselves this question, and *by mistake or otherwise* happen to answer it in the negative, the results might be particularly inconvenient to the Church of England, especially at the present moment. The son of Peleus inquires in the Iliad whether the Atridæ alone are privileged to love their wives. Perhaps Dissenters might by such examples, be prompted to inquire whether Episcopalians alone are to be allowed to keep a conscience!

And what is the reason assigned by this conscientious gentleman for his denial of a petty civility to the Remonstrant Congregation of Ballymoney? The persons composing it are not to be allowed to take stones from his quarry, because they, forsooth, are *Arians!* while he himself as we presume, is a *Trinitarian*. That is to say, they worship THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, whom Mr. Cromie also adores; but abstain from the worship of two other persons whom Mr. Cromie *believes* to be entitled to the homage of religious adoration. This is at the worst, only an error of omission, on their part, even according to the estimate of their conscientious landlord. Were he to enter the place where this Arian Congregation assemble to worship God, he would hear no prayer in which he could not join with perfect propriety; although there might be something wanting, which he would wish had been added. This is the head and front of their offence; but it appears so great to the mind of Mr. Cromie, that he has felt himself obliged to withhold an act of customary politeness, from those who are guilty of it; and to declare that further applications are useless, as he has made up his mind on the subject. This is his treatment of the unfortunate *Arians*.

There is, however a Congregation of Roman Catholics in the same neighbourhood, who are at the present moment engaged in erecting a Chapel for their worship; and to them Mr. Cromie has acted a more liberal part; for he has granted to the Catholics that permission which he has denied to the Remonstrants. Now, as the Roman Catholics are in the habit of presenting religious adoration to the Virgin Mary and a number of Saints

and Apostles; and as all such worship must in Mr. Cromie's opinion be *idolatrous*, if he be a consistent member of the Church of England; it follows, that in his judgment it is better to commit idolatry, than to engage in a worship, which, so far as it goes, he allows to be pure, though he believes it to be imperfect—that is to say, it is better, according to him, *to do a positive wrong*, and to do it repeatedly and habitually, than to omit the performance of *one particular thing*, which he judges to be right. This is the way in which his conscience compels him to act. He feels no scruple in extending his favour to the persons, whose religion he has sworn in his oath of office as a magistrate, to be nothing less than idolatry; while he refuses the common courtesies of a landlord to the Remonstrants, whose form of worship is such that he might join in every part of it with perfect propriety and consistency. Truly some men's consciences lead them into awkward situations! The awkwardness of Mr. Cromie's situation is increased by his having some time since granted the use of his quarry to the Covenanters, for the erection of their meeting-house; it being a matter of notoriety that in the solemn league and covenant, and other symbolic writings of that church, Papacy and Episcopacy are both denounced, and condemned to be uprooted by all the means which can be employed for the purpose. Without subscribing this document, no person can be a minister among the Covenanters, nor we believe received into communion with any of their congregations; and these are the persons whom, together with the Roman Catholics, the zealous and conscientious Episcopalian, Mr. Cromie, selects for the objects of his especial favour!

Let not the tenour of these latter observations be mistaken. We are far from disapproving of Mr. Cromie's conduct in granting the required accommodation to the Roman Catholics and Covenanters of Ballymoney. On the contrary we highly approve of his behaviour in so doing. But we do most decidedly condemn his inconsistency, in refusing to *others* what he has felt no scruple in according to *them*.

It may be thought that in these strictures we have been more severe than the occasion required. Perhaps there might be some reason for saying so, were there no more in this business than meets the eye. But we feel perfectly convinced, that the object for which the slight

was put upon the Remonstrants of Ballymoney, was much more important than to retard for a few months the building of their meeting-house. It was designed, not simply to delay the erection of their place of worship, *but to destroy their congregation.* Mr. Cromie is the person on whose estate a great many of the members of the newly-formed society reside; and this demonstration of his feeling, was intended, as we have reason to think, to serve as a hint to those of his tenants who might be inclined to join the Remonstrants, that they cannot do so without incurring his displeasure; and to those who have done so already, that they can only regain his forfeited favour by relinquishing their recently adopted connexion. But we know the Remonstrants of Ballymoney; and we can take it upon ourselves to assure Mr. Cromie, that his threats and his annoyances will be equally fruitless, when addressed to men of their firm and determined character. Their religious views are too deeply considered and too seriously embraced, to be abandoned at the bidding of a fellow-mortal! He may, no doubt—so far as the use of his quarry is concerned,—do with it what he pleases; for it is his own: but they will teach him that the consciences of his tenantry are not under his control, *for they are not his own!*

After all, the power of Mr. Cromie to injure the congregation, happily does not extend as far as his inclination. It is fortunate that although stone cannot be had for the erection of a Meeting-house in Ballymoney, (for there is no quarry in that neighbourhood but his,) yet *brick* can be manufactured and purchased in every part of the country. It is true that the cost of the material will be greatly increased by his illiberality; but we are sure, if the congregation think it necessary to apply for assistance to meet this additional demand, they will receive aid from many quarters; were it only to show that the time is come when the formation and profession of religious opinion must be left free and unshackled; when man must not attempt to dictate a creed to his brother, and landlords, content with their just influence over the property of their tenantry, must desist **FOR EVER**, from their tyrannical efforts to establish *a dominion over their souls!*

R.

#### OBITUARY.

DIED at his house at Aunadale, near Belfast, on the 28th August, 1832, JAMES TRAIL KENNEDY, Esq., at the age of 84 years.

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

No. IX.

OCTOBER, 1832.

VOL. III.

ADAM, CAIN, AND ABEL.\*

THOUGH Adam lived 930 years, the narrative of his life is brief, and the incidents few; the principal one is his transgression, from which have sprung all the branches of systematic and polemical divinity which now overshadow the earth. These I abandon to deeper theologians, as the subject of this paper is only to moralize upon the history of Adam and his family. Some, despairing of any other solution of the difficulties connected with this subject, have resolved the whole into an allegory; others, who cannot resort to this expedient, are perplexed in accounting for the apparent insignificance of the command. But they should consider that the violation of a positive prohibition was the only sin of which our first parents could be guilty; for the ceremonial table of the law was not then enacted, and the moral duties of the second it was not possible for them to violate. Still they were placed in a state of probation, and being thus protected from the vices of social life, no mode of trial remained, but some proof of their regard to the will and authority of God. Of this the only test was some arbitrary injunction.

As the transgression of our first parents dissolved the moral relation between man and God; so the murder of Abel by his brother Cain, tore asunder the ties of affection between man and man, and burst those bonds which their Creator had contrived to unite them in the most lasting amity and the most cordial affection. Other connexions may be formed at pleasure, answer their end, and be dissolved; but as the ties of blood and kindred are formed by nature, without our consent, so they must endure for life: they may be violated, but can never be dissolved. Other associations may be founded in a temporary fugitive liking, a brief and mercenary interest, or some transient and fleeting gratification; but brotherly love has its foundations deeply laid in natural affection,

\* A foot note for the Peopling of the Globe, see page 337.



early habits, mutual wants, and indissoluble union. These, it might be hoped, would at least protect the links of love from the rust and canker of sordid and corroding vices. If nothing of the connexion remained, but that reciprocal interest on which the prosperity of families depends, and by which their union is cemented, this alone might preserve it from jealousy and envy.

There are cases in which the malevolent affections carry with them an appearance of reason, and seem, at least, to be founded on some personal interest, or perversion of self-love, as when provoked by some violent injury or wanton insult, or where the advantage of one of the parties is incompatible with the safety or prosperity of the other, and where they are competitors for an object of a limited nature, which being insufficient to satisfy both, what is given to the one may seem to be withheld from the other. But these, though the most natural, are by no means the most common occasions of jealousy. It is more generally excited by a superiority in qualifications, in which any essential interest is very little, if at all, concerned; and often in competition for some possession or gratification, of which there is enough for both, and in which the success of the one does not detract from the prospects or pretensions of the other. Now every aggravation that has been mentioned, conspires to brand the envy of Cain with everlasting infamy.

Cain and Abel were not only brothers, united by all the ties of natural affection, mutual interest, and duty to their common parents; but they were the only brothers that existed on the face of the earth, and perhaps the only children, as far as we are informed, of their unfortunate parents. Those violent competitions, which have since that time, so often stained our mother earth with the blood of her children, did not then exist. The extravagant ideas of property, monopoly and power, which now convulse the world, were then unknown. Strange, if two plain men could not find room on the whole globe of the earth! This imaginary rivalry was also, in their case, effectually precluded by the choice of different occupations, different in their nature and the place in which they were exercised, and so far from being inconsistent that they were subsidiary to each other. "Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain was a tiller of the ground:"

the one occupied in his farm, the other roving over the boundless pastures of that fertile land. Abel was incapable of consuming the produce of his flocks and herds, and able to supply his brother with meat, drink, and clothing, out of the superabundance of the milk, flesh, wool, and hides of his cattle; and Cain ready to barter for these his corn, wine and oil—bread to strengthen his body, and wine to rejoice his heart. Such was the strict, natural, and beneficial nature of their alliance.

What, then, was the object of their strife and competition? As interest was out of the question, it must have been some point of vanity and pride. Jealousy always supposes one of these; and this leads us to the discovery of the next vice that sprang from the corruption of our first parents. This was spiritual pride. "In process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord: and Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof: and the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and his offering he had no respect; and Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." Here is the seed and origin of that inhuman and ungodly—that inconsistent and monstrous passion, which has so often, since that time, desolated the earth, and sacrificed the successors of the meek and pious Abel, to the ferocious and impious followers of Cain. In these two brothers we see a type of those impious and tyrannical persecutors, and those meek and holy martyrs, who have filled the volumes of ecclesiastical history with their cruelty and their sufferings.

Among the aggravations attending the malignity of Cain, this was not the least, that there was neither guilt to be punished, nor injury to be resented or redressed; neither loss to be repaired, nor advantage to be gained. On the contrary, his gratuitous and unprovoked malice was exasperated by the innocence of its object; and the perpetration of his crime was the immediate cause of his own ruin. His brother enjoyed the divine favour in consequence of his piety; and he put him to death, as if he expected, like some foolish savages, to inherit his virtues. His chagrin was occasioned by the displeasure of the Almighty, and to cure it he perpetrated murder, an atrocious, unnatural, and, till then, unheard of crime, which must aggravate that

displeasure. This he did in open contradiction, and wilful disobedience to that divine remonstrance: "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? if thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted?" Who could imagine that such a pusillanimous vice could produce such a bloody and desperate catastrophe?

As we are taught by the example of our first parents the danger of transmitting our vices to our posterity, and the dreadful responsibility thus attached to those, who wilfully offend: so by that of Cain we are warned of the horrid excess and dreadful consequences, even of those infirmities of mind, against which we are least on our guard, and which are, on that very account, most likely to beset and overthrow us. Besides these edifying lessons, this portion of scripture presents us with a melancholy picture of human frailty, and of the alarming consequences and rapid increase of sin. The first created pair were ruined, without the impulse of want, or the seduction of example, by sensuality, vanity, presumption, ambition, and rebellion against their Creator: "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." By those feminine foibles the virtue of Eve was easily undermined; Adam was overcome by female blandishments, and then attempted to transfer the blame to his Maker and his wife—"The *woman* whom *thou* gavest to be with me, gave it me, and I did eat." Not content with innocence and the knowledge of what was good, their vain and impious curiosity prompted them to become acquainted with evil; thoughtless as they were, but not ignorant or unadvised, that moral and natural evil, misery and sin, are inseparable companions, and that "Sin, when it is perfected, bringeth forth death." In addition to these vicious propensities the first generation of men, and even the first-born man, was led on by irreligion, pride, and envy, to a most foul and unnatural murder. The consequences of these crimes were, horror of conscience, hatred of life, and fear of death. "I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth; and any one that findeth me shall slay me:" a few remarks on this horrible state of mind shall occupy the sequel of this article.

When scenes of compunction and anguish are forcibly described or represented on the stage, we acknowledge that the upbraidings of a guilty conscience are of themselves sufficient damnation: but men do not reflect on this truth in time. They plunge precipitately into a gulf of guilt and despair; and then can find no other cure for their horrors but intoxication, infidelity and hardness of heart; and thus conscience, a heavenly angel, sent to admonish them of their errors, and conduct them to happiness, is converted into a hellish fury, that precipitates their downfall, and hurries them into everlasting ruin.

Let me entreat the young, and all, who have hitherto retained their innocence, to guard against this fatal error. Let them be watchful of the workings of their minds betimes. The sensibility of our moral feelings appears at first to be extreme. The modest youth, when he feels the first stings of self-reproach, is impatient of the smart. It is occasioned by some trivial breach of civility, or inattention to decorum. He is conscious of innocence, yet suffers the punishment of guilt. The action was perhaps unobserved, or has been forgotten by the person offended, yet the shaft still sticks in his side. This is a painful, but an instructive lesson. Let him think what would be his feelings, had he been guilty of rudeness, brutality, insolence, and oppression; if he had insulted the helpless, drawn tears from the innocent, treated modest worth with scorn, or dismissed the humble suppliant, who had looked up to him for relief, to mourn in silence his unfeeling cruelty. If such a pang can attend the first blush, that suffuses his youthful cheek, let him anticipate the agony attached to real crimes, to the ruin of unsuspecting, confiding, and affectionate innocence, the unhallowed hoards of the legal plunderer, the treacherous friend, the perjured witness, or the murderer of his brother. Let him picture to himself a mind conscious of such a crime, wholly occupied with such a recollection, refusing admittance to any other thought: that has exchanged the solid satisfaction of conscious innocence, the peaceful contemplation of kindness and benevolence, the playful variety of cheerful ideas, that dance through the virtuous mind, for one gloomy image that dispels his slumbers, or peoples them with horrid spectres.

By the various acts of extortion and fraud, or by cruelty and oppression, a man may amass treasures and acquire power, which may seem to defy the caprice of fortune, and to shelter him from the calamities of life; but that canker worm, a guilty conscience, will "smite his gourd," and wither its spreading leaves. He may join field to field and house to house. He may be arrayed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day; but the recollection of his crimes will taint his food between his teeth, and destroy the relish of those delicious wines; tarnish the splendour of that gilded equipage, and reduce to their native worthlessness those ill-gotten hoards, for which he had forfeited his peace. From his stately mansion he looks with envy upon the cheerful band of reapers cutting down his corn, or the patient hind whistling beside his team. He hears their rural pastimes at the close of day, till they retire to their peaceful slumbers. He beholds troops of happy strangers enjoying his lawns, his gardens and his groves, while he can behold nothing but one frightful phantom, presenting to him alternately the dagger, the halter and the bowl. He makes his election and hastens to that hell, which he hopes to find more tolerable than the hell within him. Death his greatest fear becomes his only hope: and that hope is enveloped in despair. He loathes life, trembles at death; yet unable to endure his present misery, plunges into everlasting misery.

Such were the hasty strides with which sin advanced even in Paradise; and while as yet the human race was one family; while as yet the ties of blood were not relaxed; before the instinct of brotherly love was dissipated through too wide a sphere: and such the reflections suggested by that horrid deed which first polluted the earth with human gore.

"Now these things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. They happened unto them for our examples; and they were written for our admonition." The example of Cain is more particularly recorded as a warning against the indulgence of an envious disposition.

Envy is the child of baseness and avarice, and the parent of discontent and mortification. In the first place it indicates meanness and inferiority. If you



envy another for abilities or wealth, extent, power or purity of reputation, for amiable manners and beauty of person, you confess a pain at sense of inferiority in those endowments that excite your envy. Neither can this sense of inferiority claim the merit of humility. For humility argues not merely a low opinion of personal qualifications, but also a meek resignation to those particulars in our fate, which we cannot honestly improve, and is not inconsistent with the highest esteem and most unreserved friendship for those who excel us. But envy precludes every sentiment of esteem or friendship. Humility is a virtue: envy is the meanest of vices. It necessarily implies rancorous and deadly, though unmerited hatred. It implies avarice, an unjust desire of arming ourselves in the spoils of one, who is guilty of no other fault than that of excelling us. Envy is not a principle, that rouses a man to any vigorous exertion: though it bears some resemblance to emulation, it differs from it in this respect. It evinces the vanity of ambition without its activity; the meanness of avarice, without its industrious or enterprising spirit.—The avaricious man is prompted by a violent and natural desire. But the peculiar baseness of envy consists in this, that it is not excited by any natural passion, or powerful allurements. Thus the vileness of the disposition is aggravated by the slightness of the temptation. Avarice and ambition wish to monopolize for their own use, the wealth and power of the world; indifferent to whose lot they may fall, if they are unsuccessful in the pursuit. But the envious man would strip the object of his sordid passion of every valuable acquisition or estimable quality, indifferent whether he possess them himself or not. Avarice and ambition would enrich and exalt themselves, but envy only aims at impoverishing the wealthy and degrading the dignified. When we declaim against envy, it is not necessary to contrast it with the beauty of virtue. Its baseness appears sufficiently when compared with the infamy of other vices; and its absurdity appears conspicuously amidst the most ridiculous pursuits and unsatisfactory passions. Further, this vice is not only the child of baseness and injustice, but also the parent of discontent and mortification. It begets a dislike of our situation; and

from this discontent all the elegant comforts of life cannot protect us; because they are no safeguard against envy. Envy, the harpy, defiles and poisons all our enjoyments: for, under the influence of this passion, how can we enjoy the blessings of our situation, whilst others possess more than we; or how is it possible for us to be happy while another, even in a lower situation, contrives to be happier than we. "What avail the glory of riches, and the multitude of children," and all the gratifications of vanity, avarice, and ambition? "All this availeth us nothing, so long as we see Mordecai the Jew, sitting at the King's gate." But if a gallows were erected, fifty cubits high, and Mordecai were hanged thereon, then and not till then could we go in merrily to the banquet.

Another mischief arising from this vile disposition is, that it dissolves the ties of blood. An envious person cannot rejoice in the prosperity of his nearest relations; but hates his brother if he be better or happier than himself. When David was sent by his father to carry provisions to the camp, for the use of his three brothers, who fought under Saul against the Philistines, he found the whole army in the utmost consternation; for a gigantic champion had repeatedly challenged the bravest of the Israelites to single combat. David's indignation was greatly raised by the insult offered to the armies of the living God; and finding, that none of the Israelites was disposed to cope with the formidable champion, he began to entertain thoughts of offering himself as the antagonist of the great Goliath. But as soon as Elial, his eldest brother, heard him declaring his resolution, instead of rejoicing, that he should acquire the glory of the combat, or endeavouring to dissuade his youth from the hazardous experiment, his mind was inflamed with envy. His anger was kindled against David; and though he well knew the cause of his journey to the camp was kind and friendly to himself, he vented his envious suggestions in these ungenerous and unbrotherly terms. 'Why comest thou down hither,' and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the haughtiness of thy heart; for thou art come down, that thou mightest see the battle.'

It was also remarked, that envy is generally productive of mortification. As it is not an active passion, its designs are generally frustrated, and the envious person is doomed to pine away in hopeless discontent.

When Saul heard the chorus of virgins, and the soldiers in their martial songs extolling the valour of David, he was very wroth; and he said, they have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands. 'And Saul envied David from that day forward.' It is needless to recite the well-known train of mortification, disappointment and disgrace, in which he was involved by this unhappy passion. He hated the son of Jesse for devoting himself to his service, persecuted him with unrelenting though unavailing fury, and owed his life repeatedly to the forbearance of his generous enemy.

Envy then is the meanest of all vices. It is the most painful and most humiliating disposition that any one can indulge. It is the most absurd in its object, and the most fruitless in its gratification.

It promises neither profit nor pleasure. It has no alliance with emulation or ambition. It is incompatible above all with pride.

It is in direct opposition to every virtuous principle: and its alliance is scorned even by the vices, that boast of any mixture of boldness or generosity. It adopts the meanest and most insidious expedients for the attainment of its purposes. For this reason Solomon says, that "Wrath is cruel and anger is outrageous, but who is able to stand before envy?" It is easier to resist the fury or exhaust the cruelty of a passionate man, than to guard against the slanderous insinuations, the defamatory innuendoes, the treacherous winks and smiles of envy.

ERASMUS.

---

#### PUBLIC WORSHIP.

I WISH to examine some of the common excuses for neglecting public worship. I would not be severe, or unreasonable, or uncharitable. I well know that many persons are necessarily detained from the house of God. Ill health, domestic concerns, bad weather, travelling, and a variety of other causes, furnish satisfactory excuses.

The first excuse I shall notice is this—*the want of proper clothing*. This is offered by two different classes of persons. The first are those who are unwilling to appear at worship, unless they can make as showy an appearance as any in their station. Hence they are frequently detained at home by this ambition. Now, is not this a false principle of action? Does it not originate in unbecoming pride? And is it not productive of pernicious consequences? With such vanity, even when assembled with spiritual worshippers, our thoughts will be confined to ourselves. And while thinking of our external appearance, can we receive useful instruction? While seeking the applause of our fellow creatures, can we heartily unite in the worship of our Creator? Will the beauty and splendour of our garments render the sacred exercises more acceptable to our Saviour? Do we assemble on the sabbath to display our taste and fashion, and to attract notice and excite observation, or to bow down with reverence and gratitude before the Father of our spirits, who is no respecter of persons, and who judges not according to the outward appearance, but looks on the heart, and gives grace to the humble? O let not sinful pride detain any one from assembling with those who keep holy time. Let us think more of the Sunday dresses of our souls, and less of the outward adorning of our bodies, when we prepare to enter the house of our heavenly Father.

The other class who make this excuse, are those whom misfortune has reduced from affluent circumstances. They are indeed deserving of christian sympathy. But because infinite wisdom has deprived you of one favor, will you deprive yourself of greater blessings? Will you let an unsubmissive spirit detain you from the sanctuary for the afflicted? The church is the only place on this side the grave, where the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, are taught to forget the momentary distinctions of birth, and rank, and fortune, and station; and to realize their entire dependance on that all wise Governor, who makes one to differ from another, and who is still the father of all. Here, is offered to your acceptance that good portion which can never be taken away. Here you may acquire that heavenly love which casts out all fear of man. Here,

you may secure a title to an inheritance, incorrupted, undefiled, and unfading. Here, you are offered an adequate remedy for all your temporal afflictions. And because you have lost some of those things which perish with the using, will you refuse imperishable riches? O let us not forsake this last resort of disappointed hope. Let us not reject the invaluable legacy of a risen Saviour. Let us ever imitate his uniform custom of visiting our Father's house, on each returning sabbath. Any apparel which does not attract attention, or excite observation, either by its meanness or splendour, is proper for the house of God. And, I presume, there are none in any of our religious societies, who are unable to provide themselves such raiment. Consequently that is not a satisfactory excuse for either class.

The second excuse which I shall consider is this—*fatigue caused by the labors of the preceding week*. I well know there are times and seasons when extra exertions seem necessary; and they doubtless unfit a person for the religious observance of the sabbath. But such periods seldom occur. And if a person is able to walk about, I believe he would suffer no inconvenience from attending worship. Nay, I believe he would be much better so to do, than he would to benumb and stupify his faculties, by a whole day's idleness and sleep. To prepare himself for the sanctuary; to breathe the pure atmosphere; to meet the joyful countenances of his acquaintance; to unite in the soothing voice of devotion; to have his feelings enlivened by animating music, and his mind stored with useful reflections, would have a most salutary effect on his spirits. In no other way could he obtain so much real relaxation, receive so much pure enjoyment, and become so well prepared for the labours of the ensuing week. This excuse, therefore will seldom apply.

But, why should any one wish to disqualify himself, by excessive labour, for the public worship of God? The sabbath was made for man; for his best interests; for his higher improvements; for his richest happiness. We have rational and immortal souls. These we are to educate for a spiritual world, where our labours, enjoyments, and society will be pure and intellectual. And, that all might have an opportunity of acquiring these qualifications for felicity, our Heavenly Father has



set apart one seventh part of our time for this purpose. If we faithfully improve this sacred season, in meditating on his works and word, in acquiring a love for his worship and service, in forming our christian characters, we shall be prepared, not only to perform the duties, encounter the temptations, submit to the trials, and enjoy the pleasures of this life; but to enjoy the felicity, and perform the duties, of a heavenly inheritance. In this way, we make the sabbath answer the end for which it was designed. But if we neglect to improve this day religiously; if we spend it in sleep, or idleness, or unnecessary business, or improper reading, or unlawful amusement, or sinful dissipation, we become more worldly-minded and depraved; we lose our relish for the purer joys of religion; we contract hurtful and dangerous habits; our influence and respectability are diminished; in times of sickness and bereavement, we are deprived of the consolations of the gospel; in some instances we become thoroughly abandoned; and in the hour of our death, our past neglect will fill our mind with anguish, and darken our prospect of a blessed immortality. Let this not be the case with us. Amidst the follies, and trials, and vices, of the world, let us have one day in seven, in which we can forget these perishing vanities, and look forward to that eternal rest, which remains for the children of God. We can labour enough for the support of these frail, decaying bodies, without encroaching on the season of meditation, and worship. Let us never have occasion to say that we are too much fatigued to attend on the public worship of our Maker; for such an excuse will not be satisfactory in the court of conscience or of heaven.

The third excuse which I shall mention, is this—*a dislike of the Preacher*. If a minister is uncharitable, and condemns those, who conscientiously embrace different religious sentiments, no one can be blamed for leaving his ministrations. Neither can any one be blamed for changing his place of worship, when he can attend upon religious instructions, more congenial to his feelings and views. But it seems altogether unreasonable to forsake worship on account of some difference in religious sentiments, or something in the style, and manner of the speaker. It is perfectly absurd to expect one person so to think, on all subjects, and so appear on

all occasions, as to please the differing tastes of a whole congregation. Neither is this at all necessary, could it be done, for spiritual improvement. Our Saviour has no where recommended a unity of opinion among his followers. Religious instructions should be dispensed with charity, and examined with candour. You are to prove all things by reason and scripture, and hold fast what you believe to be good. Receive and improve the truth, discover and reject the error. With these rights freely granted, I know not how any one can justly complain. And if you would absent yourself from worship until you can find a preacher who speculates on all subjects as you do, you will remain absent to all eternity. No two persons who thought at all, ever thought alike on all subjects, and no two ever will. So that this excuse is unreasonable and absurd.

The last excuse which I shall examine is this—*the want of inclination*. Some persons are heard to express themselves in the following terms. We pay our proportion for the support of public worship: We molest none in the enjoyment of their religious sentiments: We attend service when we feel disposed: And if we absent ourselves, most of the time, it is no one's business. If you were at sea, and observed a vessel fast approaching the fatal rocks, with the captain and crew sound asleep, should you not feel it your duty to waken the slumberers, and warn them of their danger? Certainly, responds every heart. But, exclaim the awakened seamen, the vessel is our own, the cargo is our own, our lives are our own; and what business had you to disturb our repose? If we please to trust ourselves to the mercy of the winds, and waves, and rocks, it is no one's business. But, say the benevolent, we performed this act of kindness from the best motives; solely for your good. And when you perceive your danger as sensibly as we do, you will feel truly grateful for your deliverance. Now, this is precisely the answer which obedient Christians should give to those who offer this excuse. We give you this advice and exhortation, solely for your happiness. We know, as surely as experience and observation can teach us, that by absenting yourselves from Christian worship, you deprive yourselves of one of the purest sources of earthly felicity. You set an example which you would

regret to see followed by your relatives, and friends, and families. You are forming habits which give you no satisfaction, even at the present moment; but which will yield you the most bitter fruits, in seasons of trouble and affliction. This we profess to know, as certainly as you, that the sleeping mariners were in danger of shipwreck; for those effects have most invariably followed these causes; and we also believe that by living in impenitence and irreligion, you will not be prepared for heavenly happiness. And shall we not endeavour to awaken you to a sense of your danger?—to induce you to regard your true interest both for time and eternity? And should you be aroused to a regular and hearty performance of your duties, you will soon experience the safety, the comfort, and the happiness of a religious course. In hours of trial, you will find support in your Christian integrity, and purity, and hopes. And when your eyes shall be closing on all earthly objects, the last words that shall tremble on your tongues, will be expressions of gratitude for your Christian consolation and prospects.

But this is not all. Every person is answerable for his example. And, if one may neglect public worship for a slight excuse, then may all; and thus an end would be made to the religious observance of the sabbath. Who would then be the sufferers? Not the clergy alone, as some seem to imagine. They are, generally, persons of sufficient resources, to enable them to secure a livelihood in some other employment. The people, the great mass of the people, would be the sufferers. Visit those places where the Sabbath is disregarded. Go no farther than to some parts of our own Island? All who are acquainted with those places know very well that the Sabbath is made a day of business, or pleasure, or dissipation; that the education of the rising generation is grossly neglected; that poverty is gaining ground; that open immorality is increasing with rapid strides. Take a survey of the world, and you will be convinced that where Christian institutions are best supported, there is the most intelligence, goodness, and happiness. Should the time ever arrive, when our temples of worship shall be demolished or deserted, that time will find us an ignorant, degraded, enslaved people. Let every one look well to his own example.

Let us never be kept from the house of prayer and instruction by any causes, which would not detain us from engagements of business, and pursuits of pleasure. Let us never rely on excuses which will not satisfy our consciences in seasons of reflection and sorrow; which will utterly fail us in the hour of sickness and death, and which may hereafter rise up to our condemnation. Let us rely on no excuses, but such as we shall be willing to offer our heavenly Father, in the period of judgment and eternity.

### THE APOCALYPSE.

(From the *American Christian Examiner*.)

[WE insert the following article on this subject, which has been one of much difficulty. It is from a work of a very high character both here and in America, the *Christian Examiner*, of which Dr. Channing, Professor Ware, Rev. Mr. Greenwood, and others, are the supporters. The views put forward in the following article, are those of the individual, and they are not, perhaps, exactly in accordance with our own, but they tend to clear up that, which, to many, has appeared mystical and obscure.—EDS.]

1. *The Apocalypse of St. John, or, the Prophecy of the Church of Rome, the Inquisition, the Great Revolution, the Universal War, and the Final Triumph, of Christianity; being a new interpretation.* By the REV. G. CROLY.
2. *Babylon and Infidelity foredoomed of God; a Discourse on the Phrophecies, and Apocalypse.* By the REV. E. IRVING. 2 vols.
3. *A Key to the Revelation of St. John; being an Analysis of those parts of that Prophetical Book, which relate to the general state of the Christian Church, in aftertimes; and to the peculiar Signs of those Times.* By the REV. PHILIP ALLWOOD, B.D. Fellow of Magdalen College, Cambridge. 2 vols. 8vo.
4. *Annotation on the Apocalypse.* By the very REV. J. WOODHOUSE, D.D., Dean of Litchfield, 8vo.

WE profess to hold in very light esteem, the whole progeny of Apocalyptic interpretations, great and small, which have been brought out of the heat of the

**Catholic Question in England.** However zealous and ingenious, some of them may be, they are all strangely wanting in learning and good sense. The title-pages that stand at the head of this article, have not been placed there, with the intention of making the works themselves, the subjects of any special comment; but merely for the sake of introducing, in a popular form, our own views of the book to which they relate. In disclosing these views we shall avoid, as far as possible, all doubtful questions, and all minute criticisms. We shall endeavour not only to make our own meaning, but the meaning of the writer which we wish to elucidate, plain to common readers. We shall try to strip off both the veil, and the reproach, which have been cast so long upon this portion of the New Testament. To do this requires no very profound research, and admits, at the present day, of no pretension to originality. The exposition that we shall offer has in all its leading points, been borrowed from Herder's *Maranatha*, from the *Annotations of Heinrichs*, and especially from the masterly *Commentary of Eichhorn*. We shall assume the genuineness of the Revelation, that is, that it is indeed the production of the Apostle John, though we are not unacquainted with the arguments on both sides, which have made this question, one of the nicest in sacred criticism.

The book of Revelation is, on many accounts, the most remarkable among the books of the New Testament. It is neither a narrative like the Gospels, nor an exhortation like the Epistles. It is a vision. Its object is not to unfold any doctrine, or to record any transactions that had taken place on the earth; but it opens its scene, like some gorgeous poem, among the wonders of the invisible world. Its language is not that of ordinary composition, but of symbol and allegory. It adopts the almost hieroglyphical style of some of the latest of the Hebrew prophets, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zachariah. Strange shapes and portentous signs are from the beginning to the end rising and vanishing before us. We scarcely read it as a book. It resembles a spectacle addressing itself to the eyes; or still more a drama, whose different parts are regularly introduced, and follow one another in splendid succession, interspersed with mys-



terious voices, with the speech of persons who converse together, and with odes of adoration. Indeed the form of it seems essentially dramatic, from the title to the epilogue; and by the looking at it in this light, we make the first step towards the proper understanding of it. It is a subject at least of liberal curiosity, to inquire into the contents of so singular a production. As a part of the Scriptures, of the sacred records of our religion, we take an interest in knowing for what purpose it was written, and what all those bright trains of its description import in gaining some just apprehension of its great outlines of meaning, if we cannot ascertain satisfactorily all the details. This interest is heightened by the extreme obscurity of a book, which has exercised the minds of ingenious men from the early days of the gospel until now. It is heightened still further by the circumstance, that there is continually coming out some new romance under the name of an exposition of the Apocalypse, which is soon gathered to the long, slumbering line of its predecessors in ignorance and dreaming fancies. It may seem presumptuous to profess to speak with decisiveness on a subject, which has been so variously regarded, in which the sagacious mind of Sir Isaac Newton showed itself but little in advance of the popular interpretations, and which the learned Luther gave up in despair, saying, in the preface to his translation of the book, 'Let every one think of it what his own spirit suggests; my spirit can make nothing out of it.' But the keen eye, or the good fortune of modern research has discovered what had lain so long concealed. What seems to be the true key to the secret, has been accessible to the learned world for more than the third part of a century, and has been so generally agreed on by all who are competent to judge, that no writer is now deserving of the least respect, who pretends to point out in the revelation, any prophecy of any events in civil history, either near our own times, or even since the time of its being written. The fanciful theories that have woven into it the whole history of Europe, and seen depicted upon it almost every military or ecclesiastical leader from Attila, king of the Huns, to the late Emperor of the French, have been all swept away. No enlightened critic now thinks of adopting anything

like the old ways of exposition. It requires, therefore, but a moderate share of learning, and implies no undue presumption in the attempt, to unfold the general signification of it. We enter on this task the more readily, as no work, we believe, presenting the true picture, has ever been published in England—a country, we must be permitted to say, where sacred letters are lower than in any part of Christendom that professes to cultivate them, perhaps not excepting even our own young republic.

We are anxious to convey in a few words and in general, a correct impression of what was written by John, when 'he was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.' The venerable apostle of the Lord was in banishment, at that barren and uninhabited Islet of the *Ægean* sea. The Christians were persecuted under the emperor Domitian, and it was not to be supposed that their leader, the survivor of all his brethren, should escape. He had gathered communities of believers in all the large cities of Lesser Asia, and he was now taken from the head of them, to dwell in this desolate spot. It was natural that, in that solitude, he should think intensely of the holy cause that had made him an exile there in his old age,—the cause in which his two bosom companions, Peter and James, had already given up their lives, one by crucifixion, and the other by the sword. The churches were suffering tribulation, and the heathen were raging against the name of the Lord's anointed, like the sound of the many waters that were rolling around him. In this situation he could not but have remembered the words of his Master, 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?' But where were the signs of such a coming? John had lived out nearly all his days, but the hope seemed yet far from its fulfilment. He could only speak of the 'kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.' But he was not left to despond. The assurance was strong within him that this kingdom was to be established in great power, and that speedily. It was to prevail over its two great enemies, the Jews who had rejected its prince, and the Gentiles who were putting to death its subjects. It was to fill the earth. It was to be exalted to heaven.

It was to put an end to the evils of the world, and lead on that day of consummated glory, into which the old prophets had been rapt,—when the tabernacle of God should be with men, and the former things should have passed away, and there should be no more night, no more sea, no more death, no more curse, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. The vision of the Apocalypse was unrolled to his mind, and this was the vision—the approaching advent of Christ, and the triumph of his religion. This is the whole subject of it. It has no other. It is not prophetic of any particular transactions. So far from looking forward into the minute details of events that were centuries afterwards to take place, it declares, in the very beginning, that it is ‘to show things which must shortly come to pass,’ and it repeats at the close, he who testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly.’ Whether the seer, in the images which he presents to us, anticipated a personal appearing of the Messiah, and a literal accomplishment of the promises which he records, or whether he points to a spiritual fulfilment in the spread and blessings of the Gospel, it is, perhaps, at this distant day, impossible to determine. Whether we suppose one or the other, however, the main current of the interpretation will flow just the same.

It cannot be expected that a short essay should discuss and explain all the particulars that are contained in so long a work. We can attempt only to set in order the several parts, of which it is composed, and to touch the prominent points of its wonderful descriptions.

The title of the work is first solemnly announced, with the name of him who bears witness. John then proceeds to address the seven churches of Asia, of which he was the overseer, warning each of them against its peculiar sins and dangers, commending each wherein it was found worthy, and calling on them all to prepare for the end, and to hear what the spirit saith unto the churches’. This introduction occupies the three first chapters.—The scene is now opened. John is in the spirit. He is summoned to look into the courts of heaven, that he may learn what is decreed there to be done on the earth. A throne is before him, and one is seated thereon,—the ineffable One. Much

of the description that follows is after the manner of the vision that Ezekiel saw at the river Chebar. Before the divine presence are intelligent creatures in various shapes, and their perpetual ascription is 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.'—The seer has scarcely recovered himself from the admiration, into which he was cast by so bright a spectacle, when he perceives in the Almighty hand a book,—the book of the fates of the Gospel. But it is sealed within and without with seven seals, and no one is found worthy to loose them. While he is filled with grief at this, he discerns Christ in the form of a lamb, standing next the throne, who has prevailed to open the book; and as he receives it, the heavens again resound with praises. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

The opening of the seals now commences; and as each is broken, some prodigy is shown, denoting that times of distress await the inhabitants of the world. As the four first are successively loosed, figures representing Conquest, a bloody Death, Famine, and Pestilence, ride forth on a white, red, black, and pale horse; the last of which is followed by troops of phantoms. At the fifth seal, the shades of the martyrs are heard crying under the altar, and demanding how long their blood is to remain as if it had been shed for nought. They are answered that they must be patient for yet a little season, till their number is completed. At the same time they are clothed in white robes as an assurance of speedy victory. At the sixth seal there is a violent earthquake, which is described with all the tremendous accompaniments of Eastern imagery,—the blackened sun, the falling stars, the affrighted nations. The seer is now waiting for the last seal of this great book of events to be broken—the seventh one, for that was a favourite and sacred number with the Jewish people, and is often used in their scriptures to denote many. He is eager with curiosity to know the good or the evil that is written within the unfolding volume. But suddenly there is a

pause. A solemn preparation must usher in so important a disclosure. The four angels who preside over the four winds, and who were ready to let them loose over the earth, are restrained. There had been enough of terror, and some gracious sign must now be interposed for the reassurance of the faithful, to show that these calamities were for their enemies and not for them, and so to answer the consoling purpose for which the vision was revealed. An angel ascends from the east, the beneficent quarter of the rising sun, and orders that there shall be perfect repose and safety, till the lovers of truth, the servants of God, have all been stamped with his signet of salvation. He carries the seal in his hand, and fixes its mark on their foreheads. First, from every tribe of Israel the chosen are designated; and then from all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. A great multitude, which no man can number, is standing before the throne in the robes of the accepted, and carrying palm-branches of praise. And now the temple of heaven is filled again with ascriptions of glory mixed with promises of everlasting peace. All the immortal spirits cry out together,—‘Blessing and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honour and power and might, be unto our God for ever and ever;’ and a gentle voice is heard after that shout, saying, ‘The Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.’

The seventh seal now gives way. The book is unclosed. A dread silence of half an hour prepares the mind for the sorrows, which are about to be denounced on the unreclaimed portions of mankind. But what has produced that stillness and awe? Seven angels come forth with trumpets in their hands to sound the decrees of almighty displeasure. All are in suspense. An interceding spirit approaches the heavenly altar, and while he offers up from his golden censer, the approved odor of incense with the prayers of saints, he casts down on the earth the live coals which he had used in his ministry, as a sign of burning wrath on the enemies of the faith; and then follow noises, and thunderings and lightnings, and an earthquake. Here is an end of delays. The seven angels prepare themselves to sound,



The principal action of this divine drama is now to begin. We shall find it to be distributed into three parts; first, the victory over Judaism, under the figure of the destruction of Jerusalem; then the victory over heathenism, under the figure of the overthrow of Rome; and finally, the descent of the spiritual Jerusalem, the tabernacle and kingdom of God upon a renovated world. The seven angels with trumpets who had come forward at the yielding of the seventh seal, are preparing themselves to sound.—At the blast of the first trumpet, a storm of hail and fire spreads devastation over the earth. At that of the second, a burning mountain is cast into the sea, destroying a large part of its inhabitants, and covering it with wrecks. At that of the third, a bitter star falls from heaven on the fountains and streams, so that many die of their poisoned waters. At that of the fourth, the lights of heaven shrink up and lose a third part of their lustre. Nothing further is denoted by these signs, which are borrowed chiefly from the plagues of Egypt, than a general season of calamity. A pause is here interposed, such as happened after the four first seals, when Conquest and Carnage, Famine and Pestilence, rode forth in company. An angel, meanwhile, is heard denouncing further woes as he flies like an eagle through the midst of heaven. The fifth trumpet is now blown. A star, like an angel, descends and opens a subterraneous abyss, out of which rises a swarm of loathsome shapes, locusts with the stings of scorpions, to whom is given power to torment ‘those who have not the seal of God on their foreheads,’ during five months; a period of time probably suggested by the fact, that it is only for the five months from May to September that the locusts and scorpions infest Judea. We are to remember that Jerusalem had become a ruin under the Roman power, during the reign before that in which the Apocalypse was composed; and in these fierce insects, which were permitted only to wound and not to destroy, we probably see a description of those ferocious partisans called zealots, by whom the holy city was so grievously afflicted before the advance of the enemy to its walls. The sixth angel sounds, and the squadrons of an immense army are seen on their march. They are mounted on steeds of preternatural form, that breathe out a destruc-

tive flame, and are commanded by four spirits, who have been loosed for this very purpose from their prison in the deserts of the Euphrates;—for since from that spot the land had been so often invaded and ravaged, the Jews of Palestine imagined that evil angels, and ministers of wrath were kept confined there till their agency was needed. These spirits had been ‘prepared for an hour and a day, and a month and a year,’ that is, for any period that God should appoint, and they are now leading on their forces to slay; but the rest of the men who were not killed by these plagues yet repented not. That host represented the Roman legions, and it is well known that nothing could exceed the obstinacy of the Hebrews in their last disastrous war.

*(To be concluded in our next.)*

---

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—That the observance of a Sabbath was a duty intended to be perpetual, and not merely of local obligation and temporary duration, has been the prevailing opinion amongst all religious persuasions; yet I am aware that some who have ranked the highest amongst the sons of genius—whose talents have been successfully exerted in the cause of truth and virtue, and before whose high intellectual attainments mine would bow in humble respect and admiration, have disallowed its perpetuity and look on it as part of the Jewish ceremonial of which charity takes no account. Such was the opinion of the late Thos. Belsham, a man eminent for his piety and talents. Not having access to any of his works, I am ignorant on what grounds this opinion can be supported. If any of your readers holding similar views, will favour the writer of the following remarks with a reply, it may be serviceable, although in some degree a speculative question, to the cause of truth and Christian freedom.

ON THE PERPETUITY OF THE SABBATH.

The human mind bears unquestionable marks of its high origin and future immortality. The power of thought, the strength of our affections, imagination, judgment, will, all speak to us, in powerful language, of another state of being, where these our intellectual fa-

culties, freed from their "mortal evil," shall expand in a more genial clime. Is it then to be supposed that a being endowed with these glorious and immortal energies, the cultivation of which is a duty commanded, and which brings with it its own reward, should be left to the uncertain, transient thoughts and reflections, which each day's occupation may happen to suggest, or that these would be sufficient for the purposes of moral culture and improvement, and for attaining to that state of intellectual purity necessary for advancing hereafter in the scale of being? Is it not rather a wise and benevolent appointment, that a stated portion of our time be set apart for that end, unsullied with the common pursuits of every day life, and thus by high and holy meditation derive light and assistance to steer our course with safety through the perils of mortality?

Although the Christian Sabbath is not the same in order as that which was held under the Jewish law, yet in spirit and obligation it is still the same; and to me it appears that the observance of it is a duty, which no progressive changes of our being, no advancement of our intellectual faculties can supersede or annul. The high antiquity of the sabbath, coeval with the creation, is a circumstance not altogether undeserving of respect; and its wisdom and utility may well be adduced as proofs of its divine origin, had it even been unsupported by Scripture testimony in its favour. God sanctified the day, or, agreeably to the Hebrew idiom, caused it to be sanctified, by his example. Owing to the conciseness of sacred history, we have no particular account of its being observed in the patriarchal ages, but as the command to hallow it was not founded on any circumstances peculiar to our first parents, we may conclude that their descendants continued to observe it. Indeed it has been conjectured, with every appearance of probability, that Cain and Abel offered their sacrifices on the Sabbath. *In process of time*, (Gen. iv 3) should be translated, *in the end of days*, that is, after the expiration of days appointed for labour. In Gen. 8, 8—12, we read, that Noah measured time by weeks, and that the period which elapsed after each endeavour to learn the state of the flood being exactly a week, we may naturally conclude that he made choice of the Sabbath, a day peculiarly devoted to God, for look-

ing for the completion of his miraculous deliverance. The observance of periods of seven days in the Gentile world may be traced to the same divine origin—a custom continued through ages when the cause was forgotten. That the observance of a Sabbath formed no part of the abrogated ceremonial, we may learn from the conduct of our Saviour and the early Christians. From the burdensome observance of the ritual, he fully absolved his followers; but the spirit of its moral precepts he continually enforced by his example.

Having now glanced at the origin of this institution and the authority by which it has been supported, permit me to say a few words on the use and necessity of it, the superior wisdom manifested in its appointment, and how we may best employ it, so as to benefit ourselves and others. Experience assures us that we stand in need of these stated calls of our religion, these friendly beacons, to warn and remind us of the great objects of our existence. Purely spiritual worship is too refined to overcome the worldly influences which surround us. High as our contemplations may soar in moments of secret devotion—vivid and inspiring as may then be our conceptions of Deity, yet the spirit quickly again returns to earth, and needs so often to be cherished and revived, that we have cause to long for a purer atmosphere undimmed by the clouds of worldly interests and passions. But the Sabbath comes like the heavenly messenger of old, with healing on its wings, breathing glory to God in the highest, and peace to the troubled spirits of men. One day in seven we have the happy privilege of consecrating to futurity, when the imprisoned soul, set free from the cares, the occupations, the busy tumults of life, can cherish communion with the Great Parent of the universe. The surrounding stillness favours contemplation and repose. Another week has passed away, never to be recalled; and whatever record it bears, whether good or evil, will testify of us hereafter. If it has viewed us triumphant over temptation, or yielding as willing victims to its sway, may we render thanks to him who has given us the victory, or solicit aid to strengthen us in time to come.

None have ever reached so high a pinnacle of virtue as not to require or stand in need of the *instrumental*

duties of religion. The most elevated beings are still progressing towards a state of higher perfection than they have yet attained. No limits can be placed, beyond which we cannot soar, nor can any one presume to say, that a time will come when improvement shall cease. How earnestly, how anxiously, then, ought we to use those means which are effectual to our spiritual enlargement, yet how cautious ought we to be at the same time to guard against all enthusiastic and superstitious abuse of them—against fondly cherishing and scrupulously observing the letter, while the spirit within is dead. Many observances peculiar to the Jewish Sabbath are still retained by many pious and conscientious people from a feeling that what was incumbent and obligatory on the Jews is equally binding on Christians. But the Christian lays no stress on fasts and ceremonies; nor was our Sabbath meant for a day of indolence and inactivity, a day of gloom, austerity and reserve, or that the serious employment of this day should be an apology for excluding its influence on the remaining days of the week, and spending the time in more congenial pursuits. But the time, I trust, is rapidly advancing, when these mental delusions will pass away, and feelings more worthy of the Great Benefactor of the universe, to whom all days are equal, be gratefully held and cherished.

It is a matter of no importance what day is set apart for a Sabbath, whether the seventh or the first. A seventh portion of our time we are commanded to devote to God. The first day of the week was observed by the early Christians in commemoration of our Lord's resurrection and subsequent appearance on that day, and has since been universally observed by common consent. In the Jewish dispensation, form, mode, place, and time, were distinctly specified, and fixed by immutable law; but Christians of the new and better dispensation, are set free from this depressing yoke. Few, simple, plain and significant, are the external rites, which the law of love written in our hearts, calls on us to obey.

The wisdom of appointing a stated portion of time on which all should be agreed, is manifest to all. What idea can be presented to the mind, more cheering, more consolatory, than that of one universal pause from labor



throughout the whole Christian community—giving peace, refreshment and repose to millions of created beings, and causing even the inferior animals to partake in this silent act of adoration, by sharing with them the blessings of rest and peace. On this day the laborious poor, and those more immediately in subjection to us, feel with less acuteness the yoke of bondage—the depressing ills of poverty, the scorn and contumely of the rich and great. Released for a season from the cares and oppression of temporal occupations,—from the toils and labor attendant on their lot—they are this day at liberty to taste the blessings of existence, to raise themselves above the dust, and enjoy, in a more lively manner, the bounties of their Heavenly Father—to rejoice for a season in their dignity as immortal beings, in the consciousness that all in the sight of God are equal, and that all will be judged by him without the adventitious aid of rank and fortune. To wean us gradually and gently, then, from this transitory scene—to raise our souls to contemplations becoming its native dignity—to cultivate affections, thoughts, pursuits, worthy our better nature, was the Christian Sabbath designed. If we cannot now withdraw ourselves, one day in seven, from the cares, the follies, the idle pleasures of the remaining portion of our time, how can we bear to part with them, as we must sooner or later, for ever? If we acquire not here a taste for worthier, for nobler enjoyments, how can we be fitted to enjoy the company of purified saints above? to enter those blissful mansions where pride, selfishness, and vanity, can have no place, and must for ever preclude our advance?

To us Unitarian Christians, who profess to follow the dictates of a pure and spiritual religion, the world may naturally look for confirmation in our lives, of these ennobling principles of our faith. May the great, the elevated conceptions we entertain of the Almighty, shed its own bright hue on every deed, word, and action! And O, may our most cherished affections, our warmest admiration of whatever is true, noble, and virtuous here, be as so many ascending steps to our conceptions of higher felicities above. On that day more peculiarly devoted to God, may our occupations, thoughts, and feelings, be more immediately employed in his service, and the

great interests of truth and virtue. May the luxury and *recreation of doing good* be its distinguished feature, in executing plans of benevolence, kindness, and compassion—reclaiming the unbelieving, instructing the ignorant—in contemplating the wisdom, power, and goodness of God in the works of creation, and winning others to a participation of those distinguished privileges—and may each succeeding sabbath find us prepared with new vigour to encounter and overcome the trials of mortality!

Cork,

D.

---

#### SUBSTITUTES FOR RELIGION.

---

It is the doctrine of the scriptures that ‘he that doeth righteousness is righteous.’\* And it will hardly be controverted, that by *righteousness* the sacred writers frequently mean more than the performance of the duties of man to his fellow man. This word, in the Scriptures, has often a wider scope, and implies the discharge of all our duties:—those which we owe to ourselves, as prudence, temperance, fortitude, and moral purity in general of heart and of life; all those which grow out of our relations to mankind; and those of reverence, trust, submission, worship, and obedience, which we owe to God. Righteousness in the Scriptures is often synonymous with virtue, in the broad and general sense in which that word is used by moralists of the present day; and it means moral goodness. Moral goodness, or virtue, may be defined to be the doing or the suffering of the will of God, in the hope of his favour. Thus defined, virtue, or righteousness, embraces everything which it is the will of God that we should do or bear, or abstain from doing, for the advancement and security of our own happiness, or for the benefit of others: for, in proportion as the good of the creature is promoted, in such proportion is the honor of the Creator and Governor heightened, and his favor secured.

In almost all ages of the world, there have been those who have looked for the rewards of righteousness, and

---

\* James iii, 7.

have flattered themselves, or been flattered by others, into the belief that they shall ultimately secure those rewards, upon some more favourable conditions than this painful *doing of righteousness*. There have been those who have earnestly coveted the crown, but have had no relish for the battle that must be fought for it, and who, rather than engage in the conflict in person, have chosen to rest their pretensions upon the services of some *substitute*.

1. One of the substitutes for practical goodness, on which we are apt to rest our hopes of justification and acceptance, is *good resolutions*. We look back upon the past; and, admonished by conscience, we resolve that we will be better than we have been. We know that a resolution that we will do right is the first step towards doing right. We begin to take to ourselves the credit of having completed our journey, because we have succeeded so well in beginning it. Experience, indeed, soon convinces us that our resolution was too spiritless to overcome our love of ease, and too weak to resist the onset of temptation. And we indulge our ease or yield to temptation, till an accusing conscience again drives us into a resolution that the future shall not be like the past; and we make these good resolutions so sincerely, and repeat them so often, that we are ready to believe, that they will be accepted as, at least, of some account. And it is true they are of *some* account. They are at the bottom of much, if not of all, that is great or good in the conduct of life; for we do little that is either good or great without having previously resolved that we will do it. But let us remember, that, although a foundation is indispensable to an edifice, yet a foundation may be laid, and no superstructure ever raised upon it. To prepare the ground and collect materials is not to build. To resolve is not to do. To say 'I go, sir,' yet not to go, is not to do the will of the father, who said, 'son, go *work* to-day in my vineyard.' And the prodigal was embraced by his father, and clothed in the best robe, not because he had *resolved* to arise and go to his father, while, yet, he continued in the land of his degradation, and loitered among the scenes of his riot and wretchedness, but because he *did* arise, and *did* come to the abode of plenty and of parental love.

2. The second substitute for practical virtue, or righteousness, of which we shall take notice, is a zealous *profession* of religion. It has always been more easy to profess almost any virtue than to practise it. Friendship, generosity, patriotism are much more frequently, because much more easily, professed than proved. A real devotion to the cause of philanthropy, of truth, of liberty, is a thing which involves expensive efforts. But a profession of such devotion—which, with men, will sometimes answer the same end as the real virtue,—is made at no great expense of time, or comfort, or any thing else that is valuable, unless it be of truth. The giving up of one's self to the service and the will of God is followed by labors, and attended by momentous responsibilities. But to make a parade of such devotion is no difficult matter with one who is satisfied with the reputation of a quality which he knows that he does not possess; or one who is so weak as to suppose that God seeth as man seeth, and that like man, he is liable to be deceived in judging of human character.

But, what saith the Lord to his prophet, in regard to this matter? 'Stand in the gate of the Lord's house and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah that enter in at these gates and worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are these. If ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow;—then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave your fathers forever and ever.\* The profession, or the boast of any man, that he is the temple of the Lord, that his soul is the abiding place of the ever-blessed spirit of God, is a vain profession, an empty boast, if he is polluted by the deeds, or cherishes the desires, in which that Divine Spirit has no pleasure, and with which he cannot be associated.

What says Jesus of the efficacy of these professions?

---

\* Jer, vii. 1. 7.

‘Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out demons, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.’\*

And yet are there not those who, by the importance which they attach to it, seem to think that a formal and technical *profession of religion* is the very essence of religion; that with it there is no danger, and without it no hope: that publicly assenting to some favorite formula of faith, or subscribing to certain articles, or covenanting with others to observe one particular rite of religion, is religion itself: and that the door of heaven, if opened at all for such as do not make this technical profession, is opened reluctantly for one who presents himself before it, even though he come bending under a weight of years spent in the offices of justice, humanity, and unostentatious piety?

Do not such persons consider, or do they not know, that, if there be no other evidence than such professions, that the holy and beneficent spirit of God dwells in their hearts, and animates them to a life of purity and beneficence, their professions might as well be spared? What does it prove that you belong to this or to that church; that you commune with Christians at this or that table; or that you are under the christian watch of this or that connexion? It proves that you have, within your reach, one or another *class of means* of becoming enlightened and virtuous. But it does not prove that those means are of any benefit to you,—that you have gained by them any valuable knowledge, that you are excited by them to any works of righteousness, or that you are restrained by them from any vicious indulgence. How fallacious, then, is any profession of religion, as a substitute for religion itself! How unsubstantial, as the basis of any hope of favor and of final acceptance with God!

3. The third substitute for religion, of which we shall take notice, is the *observance of the rites and ceremonies of religion*.

We do not mean to be understood as denouncing, or even disapproving religious ceremonies. We are far

---

\* Matt. vii. 23.



from wishing to banish these externals of piety. We know too well the infirmities of our nature to suppose, that even so spiritual a religion as Christianity can exist in the world, and be cherished by those who most need it, and be spread among those who are now ignorant of its influence and its hopes, without something visible to attract attention, awaken the dormant powers, command a seriousness of manner, and inspire a religious awe suited to the religious services to which they are usually attached. Let these rites be such as Christians choose to adopt, in conformity to their own understanding of the instructions of their Lord, and such as, according to the measure of wisdom severally imparted to them, they may find calculated for their enjoyment and improvement; always remembering, however, how lamentably propense the world has ever been to mistake the shadow for the substance, and to rest satisfied with the forms of religion, to the neglect of its duties and its spirit.

How continually did this propensity discover itself among the Jews, even in the purest ages of their temple-worship! In the time of our Lord, how entirely had it overcome the more rational instructions of the old prophets of Israel, and perverted the judgment of the most sage and influential doctors of the law! The beautiful proportions of Religion, as she was moulded and animated by the Divinity, and set forth by those in whom his spirit had dwelt in ancient days, were buried under the voluminous drapery of the Jewish ritual; and her lifeless form received a blind homage long after the glowing spirit had left it.

‘Wherefore’—says the intrepid Samuel to his warlike king, returning from the slaughter of a whole people—‘Wherefore didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?’ ‘And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I *have* obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag, the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites: but the *people* took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, and the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed—for what?—‘*to sacrifice unto Jehovah, thy God in Gilgal.*’ ‘And Samuel said, Hath

the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' In perfect harmony with this were the instructions of the seers of Israel in succeeding ages. 'To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? saith the Lord. When ye make many prayers I will not hear,'—why?—'your hands are full of blood.'\* 'To what purpose cometh there incense to me from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet to me.'† Not that sacrifices were in themselves wrong. Under certain regulations and conditions they were required. A refusal to offer them, under those regulations, would have been punished. But these sacrifices were required, not as an ultimate duty, but as an *inducement* to obedience still higher and more purely moral. They could never, and they will never, be accepted as a substitute for moral virtue.

In this particular the new covenant is in exact accordance with the old. The prophet of Nazareth, confirms the doctrine of the venerable array of the prophets who had gone before him. 'Go ye and learn what this meaneth—I will have mercy and not sacrifice.' 'Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law,—judgment, mercy, and faith.' Not that these ritual minutiae were criminal; but they were merely ritual, and unimportant, when compared with moral obedience—with the doing of righteousness: for, 'these things ought ye to have done, yet not to have left the other undone.'

Of what avail did Jesus give those, who had worked iniquity, to understand that it would be to them, when they should stand at last and knock at the door of light and joy, that they could then say 'we have eaten and drunk in thy presence?' It would avail them as much as the same plea will avail those, of the present day, who rest their hope of future salvation upon that rite, or upon any other, or upon all the rest, of the externals of religion.

---

\* Isaiah i. 11—15.

† Jer. vi. 20.

In our day the sacrifices of bullocks and rams are not substituted for real righteousness. But are there not other sacrifices that are?—the sacrifices of time, assigned by the Giver of our time for the practical duties of life,—time, given up by day, which is claimed by duty for business,—and time, given up by night, which is required by nature for repose:—time given up, not so much to the subduing and controlling of the animal passions, as to the excitement of them; and rather to producing a fervid state of the moral feelings, than to giving those feelings a direction to the sober offices of domestic life, and to maintaining social order, and cultivating the sympathies of our nature and the charities of our religion, and directing them towards the wants, the woes, and the frailties of mankind? And if time, and health, and charity *are* thus sacrificed—though it be done in religious meetings, and with all the formalities of religion,—when that sacrifice is not distinctly claimed by the Lord our God, what ground have we to suppose that they will be more acceptable to him than were the sheep and oxen of Saul, which were themselves the proofs of his disobedience?

4. There is another thing upon which men have depended for the character and the rewards of their religion, rather than upon the doing of righteousness, which is nearly related to that of which we have just spoken. It is *the diligent attending upon religious instruction*.

There are those, with whom seizing every opportunity that presents itself, or that can be found, out of the usual course, to hear preaching, praying, and exhortations; and zealously engaging in the support of prayer-meetings, lectures, and conferences, makes up nearly the aggregate of righteousness; and who suppose that, in walking this round, they describe the circle of religious duties. These—like those silly women, whom the Apostle describes to Timothy, as being led captive by those who have the form of godliness but deny its power—are ‘for ever learning, yet never able to come to the knowledge of the truth’—the knowledge of this great truth, that it is not enough merely to *know* our duties, but that we must also *do* them. Those who form such opinions of the righteousness that shall save them, are like scholars who spend their years in learning a

science which they never expect, and never intend, to apply to the purposes of practical life; or like one who thinks he shall become an expert artizan by only *hearing lectures* upon the mysteries of his art. We know that a man will never become a mechanic by listening to discourses upon the lever, the wedge, and the screw. He may learn the names of these powers, and may see what has been done, and what may be done by them. He may learn the uses to which particular tools are to be applied; but, till he takes them into his own hand, and spends many a day and many a night with them, he will hardly save himself from hunger and nakedness by the use of them.

Those who are thus for ever learning, must long since have learned, that we have high authority for saying ‘not the *hearers* of the law are just before God, but the *doers* of the law shall be justified.’ And let all such remember that it was a venerable servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, ‘Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.’

5. Another thing upon which Christians have fallen as a substitute for the laborious doing of righteousness is, *the holding of correct speculative opinions in regard to the doctrines of religion.*

The investigation of truth is, indeed, among the noblest and most honourable employments of the human mind. It is a delightful, although it is often a laborious employment. And Truth, when pursued and seized by her ardent lover, is unquestionably fair, and is to be cherished and venerated by all who hope to mingle with the great and good. But she is to be thus cherished and venerated, not, principally, upon her own account, but because of her high and holy ministrations. She is excellent and valuable chiefly as the handmaid of goodness. She holds out her torch to guide the doubtful and timid steps of virtue, in the darkness of her earthly way. She encourages her sinking heart by directing her eye to the glories of her heavenly home. She is the fair, the lovely attendant of virtue, but she must not be mistaken for virtue herself: for, ‘Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries

and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.'

The most correct apprehension of the doctrines of the gospel *may* be found in the head, when, at the same time, there is literally nothing of the spirit of the gospel in the heart, and when the hands are equally strangers to the works of righteousness which the gospel requires as the condition of eternal life. Those doctrines have, indeed, their importance. Their value and influence, where anything can exert an influence, are incalculable. They are highly propitious to the production of pure desires, and of chastened and enduring affection. They are favourable to the formation of good resolutions and good habits. So is the sun, and so is the rain propitious and even indispensable to the growth of fruits, for the nourishment and refreshment of the body. But as the sun may shine, and the rains may fall upon lands that lie barren for ever, so all the holy and blessed influences of truth may be exerted upon a heart so little alive to the loveliness of truth and goodness, as to be awakened by them to none of the glorious efforts of righteousness.

6. The last of the substitutes for practical, personal righteousness, of which we shall at present take notice, is one upon which the vanity of men, under the assumed name of humility, first, and very early, induced them to fall. We mean *external privileges in regard to religion*, and especially the privilege of being related to some one of distinguished piety and faith, in having been descended from him, or taught by him.

So long ago as the appearance and preaching of John the Baptist, the doctrine had become popular among the Jews, and was especially inculcated by the Pharisees, that they were entitled to a place in the kingdom of heaven, in consideration of the great privilege they enjoyed as the children of Abraham. They maintained that all, who were of the circumcision, were beloved of God, who, when he had made his covenant with Abraham, assured him with an oath, that no one, who bore the seal of that covenant, should ever descend into hell;—that the faith and righteousness of Abraham would be imputed to all his posterity;—and that they would be saved, even



to the exclusion of all the rest of mankind, through the merits of the patriarchs, and particularly of Abraham, whatever might be their own moral conduct. Some carried this doctrine of substitution so far as to say not only that God would not, but that he *could* not shut them out of the Messiah's kingdom, provided they had a *knowledge* of God, although they continued in infidelity and disobedience.

This substitute for personal righteousness, though it showed rather an unkind aspect to such as were *not* thus privileged, was particularly flattering to those who had the good fortune to be descended from Abraham. It consulted their ease, and was especially accommodating to their exclusiveness as a nation, and to their passions as individuals. And besides, as we have already suggested, it savored of modesty in those who were conscious of having done no good themselves, to renounce all hopes of acceptance upon the ground of their own righteousness, and to rely upon that of their great progenitor.

This popular error the Baptist meets and exposes when he cries in the wilderness, 'Bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say, We have Abraham for our father.' And the doctrine of John was confirmed by his great successor, who said to these same men, who thus looked to the merits and righteousness of Abraham for their salvation, 'Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out.' And he forewarns them that those who should stand without, when the master of the heavenly feast should have risen up and shut the door, and should plead with their Lord for admittance on the ground that he had taught in their streets, would find that even that privilege would be of no avail with such as had wrought iniquity.

It is not difficult to see the insufficiency of both these grounds of hope in the case of the Jews. What would it avail them that Abraham was their father? While they did not the works of Abraham,—while they showed neither his faith, nor his pious and prompt obedience,—they were none of Abraham's children. It would rather aggravate their condemnation that they had de-

generated from the virtues of their ancestor, and had become worse than others while they had enjoyed superior means of becoming better. What was it to them that the Lord had taught in their streets, and that they were so privileged as to enrol their names among his disciples,—so long as they had refused to obey his instructions and to follow in his steps of light and beneficence? Better would it be for such, could they plead for admission on the ground that they had had no privileges, than on the ground that they had enjoyed and abused them. Better, could they say, Thou hast *not*, than thou *hast* taught in our streets.

Yet, if this reasoning is conclusive, and if the delusiveness of such hopes is obvious in the case of the *Jews*, why shall we give greater credit to either of these pleas, when they are offered by Christians? And yet we hear Christians every day professing to rest all their hopes of future acceptance and glory, not, indeed, upon the merits of Abraham, or his righteousness, but upon the merits and righteousness of Christ, as son of Abraham.

Let us not be considered as undervaluing the merits of Abraham or of Christ. The faith and obedience of the father of the faithful was indeed admirable, and highly honourable and salutary to him. And we are told that they were imputed to *him*, not to his posterity, as righteousness. The righteousness of Abraham was, moreover, beneficial to his posterity; for, in consideration of it, his children were made the depositories of the divine oracles. They were enlightened in their duty, and had blessings accumulated upon them. Among the children of Jacob a light sprung up to enlighten the Gentiles: and they were, ultimately, so reclaimed from the ignorance and vices of polytheism, that, to the present day, every child of Abraham is a worshipper of the One True God, the God of Abraham. Here are temporal blessings, and moral light, and the means of moral excellence bestowed upon the children, in consideration of the faith and virtue of the ancestor. But these things do not secure the divine favour to the children. They do not, necessarily, make the children better. They may, and if abused or misapproved, they *will* make them worse, and more worthy of the condemnation into which they will ultimately fall.

And yet,—in respect to the principle upon which the moral qualities of any one moral agent are made the ground of another's hope of justification—how do the faith, the righteousness, the merits of Christ, differ from those of Abraham? The faith of Jesus, in respect to its loftiness and constancy, was indeed unparalleled. His obedience was perfect. But it was *his* obedience. He was perfectly righteous, for he fulfilled all righteousness. This was, to *him*, the basis of his eternal glory: for, inasmuch as he was obedient unto death, God highly exalted *him*, and gave him a name that is above any name. The righteousness of Christ, moreover, is beneficial to us, and to all who bear his name: for it has given us higher conceptions of goodness, and more powerful motives to virtue:—it has raised our ideas of the divine character, and of the point to which human virtue may attain. It has given new lustre to our hopes. It has confirmed the sanctions of conscience and of God's word. It has imparted to our minds more extensive and more certain knowledge of moral subjects, and has supplied us with more ample means of becoming wise and good, and of thus securing our eternal salvation. It is in ways like *these* that the righteousness of Christ has been beneficial to his disciples; and to us, as such, has opened the gates of heaven, and given us a free access to glory and to God. But, still, the righteousness of Christ is not our righteousness, nor will it ever be imputed to us as such. And so far from saving us,—if we abuse, or neglect to improve the unnumbered and incalculable benefits which he has conferred upon us, as inducements and facilities to our own personal and practical virtue, his righteousness and merits will embitter the cup of our condemnation,—however firmly we may have been persuaded to believe otherwise,—and will make it worse for us than if he had never been sent for our redemption. For why is it less absurd and less opposed to the general, the uniform principles of the divine government, to suppose that the merits of a prophet should be imputed to his disciples, than that the merits of a patriarch should be imputed to his posterity?—Why shall the plea 'We have Christ for our teacher,' stand on higher, or on any other ground than the plea 'We have Abraham for our father?' And,

where has Jesus ever taught us or encouraged us to unlearn, what we have learned from the prophet, that the 'righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him?' The righteousness of Abraham or Christ,—whatever other benefits it may confer upon the children of the one, or the disciples of the other, will never open the gates of eternal life to any one who shall have neglected or despised to be righteous himself.

By the attention which we have now paid to these several subjects,—good resolutions,—a profession of religion, by becoming connected with what is technically called the church,—the due observance of religious rites,—diligent attendance upon religious instruction,—the holding of just speculative opinions upon the subjects of religious doctrine,—and external privileges in regard to religion,—we may have become prepared to form a tolerably just estimate of their use and value. If we weigh them impartially, we shall probably agree that they all have a value, and that the importance of some of them is great. But, let us take them all for what they are—the means,—the helps—the instruments of righteousness, and not righteousness itself. They are all facilities furnished us to help us in becoming good, but they are not to be taken as substitutes for goodness. Am I the better,—is my neighbour the better—shall either of us be the happier for my good resolutions, when those resolutions have been no sooner made than broken—when they have been given to the winds in the very breath that uttered them?—Is my profession of religion either doing or bearing the will of God, in the hope of his favour, if, at the same time, it neither lightens the burden of my brother's cares, nor informs his mind, nor strengthens his confidence in God? Does my observance of the rights of religion satisfy his hunger, or clothe his naked children, or encourage them to make such efforts as shall enable them to provide for themselves the necessaries and comforts of life?—Is it probable that I shall the more faithfully impart moral instruction to my family, my friends, and associates,—that I shall more fully discharge the duties of domestic and social life,—and that I shall induce those to do so who are within the sphere of my influence,



by devoting my days and my nights to an indiscriminate attendance upon religious instruction? Will my hoarding up the treasures of speculative truth enrich my neighbour so long as I keep those treasures locked up in the secret chambers of my own mind? Will the righteousness of patriarch or prophet, in whose steps I have not been careful to follow, bring to my heart the peace that springs from a consciousness of duty cheerfully discharged, or of follies lamented and forsaken?

No:—these are all false grounds of religious confidence. They neither make us, nor prove us to be, benefactors of mankind: and though they may all have a tendency to lead us to the doing of righteousness, not all of them together show that we are already righteous. No one of them, nor yet all of them united, can be regarded as ultimate duties. They do not imply, still less do they prove, that we do, or bear, or abstain from anything, in compliance with the will of God, and in the hope of his favour: and so long as they do not, they entitle no one to the character and the hopes of the righteous: for, saith the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, ‘Let no man deceive you; *he that doeth righteousness is righteous.*’

---

#### UNITARIAN MISSIONS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN,]

SIR,—In the last published report of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society, the propriety of establishing a Mission for the Dissemination of Bible Christianity in this country, is strongly recommended. An approval of the same object was, if I mistake not, embodied in the proceedings of the Anniversary of the Unitarian Society for the diffusion of Christian knowledge, held recently in Belfast. Since that period nothing appears to have been done upon the subject.

It is unnecessary to argue the question of Proselytism. The principles of common sense and the practice of all religious bodies, prove abundantly, that if we have no anxiety to propagate our opinions, we cannot have embraced them in a right spirit. A heartfelt desire to impart our religious views to others, is the unerring test of their sincerity. That liberality is narrow, and that charity is



cant, which interpose themselves to prevent the publication of opinion. It is true that Unitarians shrink from denouncing damnation upon involuntary error. But is this an argument against the dissemination of the Truth? If so, why was Christianity originally promulgated? An answer to this inquiry will probably enable the individual who discovers it, to see why it is that the abuses of Christianity, whether Catholic or Calvinistic, should, if possible, be extirpated. True it is, also, that persons who think as we think, do not seem at first sight to have the same motives for exertion as some others of our fellow-christians. Those who believe that a furnace, blown into seven-fold fury by the wrath of the Eternal, is prepared for all who receive not the belief of certain dogmas, may be expected to strain every nerve in order to snatch a victim from the flames. They who look to see the windows of Heaven opened, and a deluge of destruction rained down on all who stand outside the ark of orthodoxy, must necessarily have their sympathies violently excited by the peril of their fellow-men; and leave no means untried to save their souls from drowning. But, because Unitarians entertain more worthy views of the moral government and character of God, shall they therefore consider themselves relieved from the task of disseminating them? So far from it, that the very converse ought to be the case. We should be zealous, not in spite of our charity, but because of it. The more widely such dishonoring notions of the Deity prevail, the more imperatively are we called upon to spread abroad ennobling ones. Innumerable are the evils which this disastrous mistake with respect to the dealings of the Universal Father with his children, has inflicted, and is still inflicting, on humanity. To say nothing of the public crimes of which it has been prolific—of the dungeons it has crammed, and the fires it has kindled, what an injurious effect does it produce upon the minds and tempers of its votaries, in the walks of private life? What impatience of opposition; what spiritual pride; what bigotry; what gloom! How like the thanksgiving of the Pharisee are those which we hear frequently offered up to God; how much in the spirit of an indictment! the supplications which are preferred on behalf of unconverted men. Surely the

advantages which would attend more benevolent opinions upon the subject under consideration, "even on this bank and shoal of time," might well compensate for every exertion made in their diffusion, though we should altogether "jump the life to come," in the estimation of their blessings. If even in the meaner sciences the consciousness of discovered truth be so inspiriting; if a great philosopher, to whose mind an interesting problem in hydrostatics was laid open, ran through the streets of Syracuse vociferating, 'I have found it, I have found it!' shall those who think they have attained to knowledge infinitely more important; who have detected the adulteration of a purer gold than any Archimedes ever tested, sit down in listless inactivity, without a wish to communicate their discovery? Let them up and be doing. Let them try every spirit which counsels them to sloth. Let them take care that when they talk about charity to others, they do not really mean ease, or popularity, to themselves.

The world, generally speaking, is too much governed by names, and there is not in Ireland a more opprobrious one than Proselytism. It is not extraordinary that it should be held in disrepute by every Roman Catholic in the land, and, every Protestant who despises cant and humbug of the grossest kind. The "new Reformation," of which we heard so much some years ago, has passed away into the limbo, appointed for the reception of such vanities. It was found that men would not disgorge transubstantiation to make room for swallowing election; that the Roman standard still retained its elevation above the banner of Geneva, and that sin and sedition, the Devil and Dr. Doyle, retained their usual influence in Ireland. But the injurious effects which attended the perhaps well meant, but certainly most injudicious attempts, of the Anti-Catholics of that day, are still clearly perceptible. The utter regardlessness of the proprieties of time and place, evinced by these individuals, the scurrilous and indiscriminate abuse, by which the Catholic priesthood was perseveringly assailed, the hostility almost unanimously evinced by the religious crusaders against popery, to the political rights of Papists, produced not merely the failure of their own efforts, but entailed suspicion, and dislike, upon all proceedings of

the kind. Against this prejudice a Unitarian advocate would be called upon to contend. It is to be hoped, however, that it is not invincible. By reversing completely the process which produced it, much might be effected. A trial, at any rate, ought certainly to be vouchsafed. The infection of infidelity has spread widely amongst the Roman Catholics of this country. Let Unitarianism, like the Hebrew priest of old, with the sacred fire in her censer, take her stand between the living and the dead, and the plague may yet be stayed.

Much may be done amongst Catholics in the south, who have outgrown their swaddling-clothes, who have become men,—who have put away childish things. Much may be done amongst the Calvinists in the North, where fanaticism is producing its natural reaction. Much may be done in the way of collecting together rational Christians, scattered throughout various districts, and assisting them to draw others after them. In these, and in many other methods, much may be done. Are the Unitarians of Ireland prepared to do it?

The Tracts already issued by the Unitarian Christian Society in Dublin, and the Christian Knowledge Society in Belfast, have not been unavailing. To throw as many as possible of these excellent little works into the public mind, is a most important object. May we not conclude that they have prepared the way for efforts of another kind, and that a Missionary of talent, character, and discretion, might now be employed with a reasonable prospect of success? Each mode possesses its own peculiar advantages. The Tract solicits attention in the calmness of the closet; its reasonings may be quietly weighed by the searcher after truth,—it never loses its temper in the heat of controversy, it seldom raises the barrier of vanity against the acknowledgement of conviction. But, on the other hand, a Missionary may catch the attention of a man who never reads at all,—he may suit his arguments to different circumstances and capacities,—he may clear up what one enquirer thinks obscure,—he may enforce what another feels convincing,—he may collect into a bright and burning focus the scattered rays of Unitarianism, which at present coldly sleep upon the minds of separate individuals.

But the Societies which have been mentioned can do nothing without a material augmentation of their funds. The object of these hasty observations is, to ascertain whether or not, by congregational collections, or any more expedient means, a sum sufficient, fit for the purpose, can be raised. The attention of such persons as take an interest in these matters, is respectfully solicited to the subject.

The Unitarians of Cork,—the most public-spirited, liberal, and enlightened, of all who profess their sentiments in Ireland,—have, in addition to their former contribution, forwarded a very handsome one, towards the establishment of a Missionary fund. This noble example has not, as yet, been followed by any other body. Do the Northerners care so little for the cause, or so much about their money, that no assistance is to be looked for at their hands?

*A Member of the I. U. C. Society.*

---

## Intelligence.

### REMONSTRANT INTELLIGENCE.

ON Friday, the 21st instant, the Presbytery of Armagh assembled at Redemon, for the purpose of installing the Rev. William Crozier, of Clonmel, to the pastoral charge of Kilmore Congregation, vacant by the death of the late Rev. Arthur Nelson. They were joined by some of their Remonstrant brethren, of the Presbytery of Bangor, and by Drs. Bruce, and Nelson, Rev. William Bruce, and Rev. David Watson, of the Presbytery of Antrim. We have seldom seen a more numerous and respectable Congregation, assembled on a similar occasion.

The services of the day were commenced by the Rev. S. C. Nelson, of Dromore. He was followed by the Rev. James Davis, of Banbridge, who preached an eloquent sermon from Heb. vi. 1. "Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." After this, the Rev. John Mitchel, of Newry, delivered an affectionate scriptural charge, to both pastor and people.

Mr. Crozier and the other Ministers, were entertained at dinner by the Congregation, together with some of the most respectable members of the Presbyterian Congregations of Saintfield, Killileagh, Ballinahinch, &c., amounting in all, to about one hundred individuals. The dinner was served in a large and commodious room, extending over the whole upper story, which contained the dormitories of the late Redemon academy. Hugh M<sup>r</sup>Roberts, Esq. of Leggagowan, acted as Chairman; and James M<sup>r</sup>Roberts, John Davison, and John Walker, Esqrs., as Croupiers.



After the removal of the cloth, the following toasts were given, prefaced by suitable observations, and most cordially received :—

“The King.”

“The Army and the Navy.”

“Earl Grey, and his Majesty’s Ministers.”

“The Lord Lieutenant, and Prosperity to Ireland.”

“The Lord of the soil, William Sharman Crawford, the best of landlords; may his talents and his virtues soon be exercised in a field, worthy of their usefulness and excellence.”

This toast was received with much approbation, by an assembly well able to appreciate his worth. When the applause had subsided, the Chairman next adverted to the obstacles thrown in the way of the settlement of this congregation, by the machinations of interfering strangers, who having long hovered over this peaceful and happy vineyard in vain, during the life of its late guardian, seemed anxious to gratify their malevolent purposes, on his demise, by instantly throwing in the brand of discord. Their difficulties, however, had served to bind the people more cordially together, to separate the chaff from the wheat, the sound from the unsound; and, it was worth their while to have been delayed, that they might obtain a Minister so likely to dwell in the hearts of his flock, and to promote their interests both temporal and spiritual, as the man with whom, on this happy day, they were connected. He would, therefore, give—

“The health and happiness of their new pastor, Mr. Crozier; welcome among us; and may the work of the Ministry prosper in his hands.”

Mr. Crozier spoke nearly as follows:—Sir, in rising to return my acknowledgements for the toast which has been so kindly given, and so cordially received, by this respectable assembly, I assure you I labour under considerable emotion, arising, in the first instance, from a lively sense of the kind reception I have met with, from those whom I have the pleasure to regard as my future brethren, friends, and parishioners; and, in the next place, from the difficulty I feel in giving due expression to all that it becomes me to say on so important an occasion. I owe it to the congregation of Kilnmore, to record my sense of the kindness and unanimity with which they have invited me to become their Minister; and, to assure them, that I entertain towards them every sentiment of regard and esteem. I trust these feelings will be heightened as our acquaintance becomes more intimate; and that our future connexion will be cemented by those pleasing and happy bonds of union, which must ever subsist between a conscientious Minister, and a worthy and cordial people. I do, indeed, look forward, with much confidence, to realize those pleasing prospects; and, it is with such views, rather than from desires of worldly advantage, that I have undertaken the pastoral charge of this respectable Congregation. Several circumstances present themselves to my mind, on which I ground my expectations of satisfaction and comfort, in my future ministry. The spot which we at present occupy, recalls many of my



early recollections. The years of my boyhood were passed in this place—under preceptors whose memory I truly revere—at a seminary which is now no more, but which was, for many years, a blessing to the country round; and the fame of which is imperishably recorded in the classic annals of the North of Ireland. During my stay I experienced much kindness from the inhabitants of this neighbourhood, and time has not obliterated these early impressions.

I rejoice to renew them after the lapse of years. I am happy to see many whom I then knew, still surviving, though now wearing the honours of the hoary head, and others of my own standing advanced to the maturity of vigorous and respectable manhood. I have received many cordial greetings on the score of old acquaintance, and I regard these kind reminiscences as a favourable omen of good feeling towards me, now that it has pleased Providence again to place me among my early friends, in different circumstances, and in an important relation. Another ground of pleasure and satisfaction to my mind in my new connexion is, the well-known independence of the community amongst whom I am called to labour. They are of that important and valuable class of society, who are the substantial strength and sinews of the country. Inhabiting a fertile district, under the fostering care of one of the most patriotic men and best landlords whom the North of Ireland can boast, they enjoy the sweets of comfort, respectability, and affluence. They are not obliged to cringe or fawn on power; and they can walk with an erect front, and fearless step, in the presence of their fellow-man. I believe, Sir, that they are also independent in *mind* as in circumstances; and that they regard the maintenance of their liberties, civil and religious, as of paramount importance. I am of opinion that they have, in general, a clear apprehension of what these invaluable privileges *are*; and that they are not to be deluded from a right discernment on these great points, by any sinister influence, specious artifices, or subtle machinations. And, allow me, Sir, to add my hope and trust, that their moral and religious character is creditable to themselves, and such as will bear a fair comparison with the general community of this favoured province. I am, also, Sir, gratified to think, that their free and unanimous choice of me to undertake their pastoral oversight, at the present juncture, is an acknowledgment, on their part, of attachment to those religious principles which I *distinctly avow*—which, I believe, I hold in common with most of my Remonstrant brethren—which I have long maintained under many disadvantages—and which I am *determined* to maintain, as, in my mind, the sacred principles of Christian *truth and liberty*. *R*, Sir, I am right in the estimate I have thus formed of the Congregation of Kilmore, I think I have reason to congratulate myself on my present settlement, and on my future prospects of comfort and satisfaction in my ministrations, amongst so respectable a portion of the Presbyterian community. There is one other circumstance to which I must allude, as adding to the gratification I feel on the present occasion—and that is, my future connexion with the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster. There is no body of men, whose

principles I more fully recognize, and whose character I more cordially esteem; and, I feel satisfied, that I shall be able, heartily, to co-operate with them in all their public measures. I have the pleasure of numbering among them the personal friends whom I truly value, and I have received kind assurances of a cordial welcome from all. I, therefore, regard myself, Sir, as about to commence my ministry in this Congregation, under favourable auspices. I am sensible of the kindness I have already received. I assure *you*, Sir, this respectable company, and my congregation at large, of my warmest wishes for their prosperity and happiness, and of my future exertions to promote their best interests; and, I return you thanks for the honour you have done me. (This address was received with loud applause.)

“The Moderator and Remonstrant Synod of Ulster.”

Mr. DAVIS returned thanks. He felt peculiarly gratified in looking round the present company. There were few of them with whom he was not intimately acquainted. In common with Mr. Crozier, he had been educated within these walls, by those highly gifted men who so long conducted Redemon Academy. To them, under God, he was indebted for whatever he at present was; and, especially for whatever independent principle he was possessed of. They had, early, taught him to use his rational faculties and to consider all his actions and habits as intimately and necessarily connected with his happiness here and hereafter. Revering, as he did, the memory of those worthy men, he had now great comfort in seeing settled in their place, a successor, who was so eminently fitted to give satisfaction to this flock. With the Remonstrant Synod, he felt happiness and honour in being connected. After dwelling at considerable length, on the principles of the Remonstrants, he maintained, that these were the only principles by means of which knowledge could be advanced, errors exploded, and men could, mutually improve their fellow-men. He concluded by proposing—

“The health of the Chairman.”

Mr. M'Roberts said, his words were few, but his heart was full and warm. Were he separated by seas and mountains, from this Congregation, his heart would thrill with delight, in even hearing of the scene which he now had the happiness to witness.

“The Ministers who officiated today.”

Mr. Mitchel, in returning thanks, said, that this day amply compensated for the days of trial and of trouble they had witnessed here, and for the insults offered, at one time, by the disturbers of the peace of the Congregation. He had no doubt, that here, as elsewhere, good would arise from transient evil; and that their principles would be more widely disseminated. He concluded, by proposing

“The Congregation of Kilmore—may peace, harmony, and the blessing of God attend it.”

Mr. Bingham returned thanks.

“Mr. White, and the Presbytery of Bangor.”

Mr. White returned thanks for that Presbytery, “in whose veins” an eminent patriot once had shed, “the milk of human kindness

flowed." In those days, the Bangor Presbytery was undivided; and, Calvinists and Unitarians, agreeing to differ, dwelt together as brethren. Of late, things had taken a different turn. The labours of some of the Calvinistic part of that Presbytery, in this portion of the vineyard, were any thing but labours of love; and their zeal in compassing sea and land, savoured, he feared, of something else than Christianity.

"Rev. Fletcher Blakely, and civil and religious liberty."

Mr. Blakely returned thanks, in an able speech; and dwelt, especially, on the fact, that attempts of oppression, whether in civil or religious matters, had ultimately been the means of extending liberty and knowledge, and of annihilating tyranny and bigotry. He saw, around him, many of a profession that had suffered much persecution from the bigotry of the present day; and who were generally among the most strenuous promoters of every thing liberal. He begged leave to propose—

"Our friends of the medical profession."

Doctors M'Cutcheon and Macoubrey returned thanks. The latter said, it was nothing new to find members of this profession foremost among the asserters of the liberty of mankind; and whilst struggling for the best interests of their species, in common with their clerical brethren, foremost also among the victims of persecution and obloquy. He made some touching allusions to Locke, Harvey, and the martyred Servetus.

"Doctor Nelson and the Presbytery of Antrim."

Doctor Nelson regretted, that Doctor Bruce had been prevented from waiting for dinner, as he could have done more justice to this toast. For himself, he was too much affected by recollections connected with the place in which they were assembled. Here he had spent his early, happy, days, with parents and brothers, and friends, now no more. The Presbytery to which he belonged, holding similar sentiments and principles with their Remonstrant brethren, rejoiced in the progress of the Remonstrant cause, and rejoiced in the issue of their struggles. Here they had lent their aid, and they were ready, when occasion might require, to lend it again. He observed, that the distinctions of *New and Old Light* should have been unknown, had not the original light been obscured by the inventions of men. If used, we claim the title of *Old Light* to ourselves,—for we derive it not from the middle centuries and the dark ages, but from *him* who is the true light, *lightening every man that cometh into the world*. Our creed we take from the Saviour himself, who teaches us to *believe in one only living God, and in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent*. On the Scriptures alone we hope to build our faith and practice; and in studying them, to exercise that reason which God has not given in vain. He compared the spirit of ancient Judaism, binding men with heavy burdens, to the spirit which, manifesting itself a century since, drove the Antrim Presbytery, and to the spirit which lately appearing in the Synod of Ulster, drove also the Remonstrants to throw off human shackles, and assert that liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. These principles had been advocated by his Father, for 54 years, the happy Minister of

this Congregation, and by his brother, for 24 years, under whose ministry the whole Congregation had unanimously joined the Remonstrants.—True, since his death, the adversary had, like a serpent, insinuated himself among them. But, though some had been weak enough to be led captive, those remained, who were the tried and steady servants of God, and the respected friends of man. He recognised around him, those whom he had early known and highly esteemed, who were always the active members of the Congregation, and inherited from their fathers a zealous love for the truth. Had Mr. Crozier been unknown to them, his connexion would be a warrant for his integrity and usefulness; but he was known here in his childhood; he was, afterwards, trained in a good school, the Synod of Munster: and, he trusted, every year would prove the justice of their choice.

“The Synod of Munster.”

Mr. Crozier acknowledged the compliment, in eloquent terms.

“Rev. William Bruce, and the Royal Belfast Institution.”

Mr. Bruce gave a lucid view of the fundamental principles of the Institution, free from all spirit of sect or party, and eminently fitted for affording a liberal education to all. Some were loud in decrying all liberal literary education. It was a bad omen for their cause. If based in ignorance, it must sink. He doubted not that the great enthusiasm with which the name of the Institution was here received, arose partly from their own peculiar connexion with it, through the late Dr. William Nelson, and from their own experience of the benefits of a similar though smaller, Academy, here, which, before the Institution had a name, was known by its happy fruits, not merely in Ireland, but in Scotland, England, and the States of America. He would propose, before sitting down,

“The memory of Dr. Moses Nelson, and of his sons, Dr. Wm. and Rev. Arthur Nelson.”

The most profound silence, marked the feelings with which this was received.

The Company separated at an early hour, in the greatest harmony and delight, and resolved to redouble their zealous exertions for the promotion of their common cause.—[*From a Correspondent of the Northern Whig.*]

---

#### ERRATA.

Page 391, line 1, read extent of power.

———— line 3, read painful sense.

———— line 15, read with the spoils.

Page 392, line 13th from the bottom read *Eliab*.

Page 393, line 9, read eyed David.

---

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

No. X.

NOVEMBER, 1832.

VOL. III.

[FOR THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

ABRAHAM.\*

THE character of Abraham is too extensive a subject for one essay. Considered as the friend of God, the progenitor of the Jews, and the fountain of the promises, the subject would form no inconsiderable part of a body of divinity. I intend, therefore, to confine myself to some observations on the private character of this great patriarch. In order to read any history with advantage, it is necessary to have a competent knowledge of the country and climate in which the events happened, and of the people, and the state of society in which they lived when these transactions took place, otherwise we shall form very erroneous ideas of the manners, and even the morals of the inhabitants, and deem many incidents altogether inexplicable, which, if possessed of the requisite preparatory knowledge, we should find perfectly intelligible. The extraordinary antiquity of the Mosaic history renders an attention to such points essential; but the extreme simplicity of manners, that prevailed at that early age, divests the subject of those difficulties, which usually embarrass more recent antiquities. In reading the history of Abraham little more is necessary, than to recollect, that he lived at an early period of the world, when the earth was thinly peopled; that the countries in which he resided, or through which he travelled, were in a warm climate, and of a dry soil, in which the inhabitants might dwell in tents, and water was an article as scarce as necessary; scarce on account of the dryness of the ground, yet peculiarly necessary from the heat of the air: and that Abraham led a wandering life, as is usual while mankind continue in a pastoral state.

The extreme drought, which prevails in Judea, during the summer months, will explain why Abraham set

\* For Adam, Cain, and Abel, see page 385.



such a high value upon wells, and why the possession of a well was sometimes a sufficient cause for hostilities between adjoining tribes, since without them the neighbouring ground would be totally useless either for pasture or tillage. The recollection of this circumstance will also explain many passages of Scripture, in which showers of rain and springs of water are spoken of with a degree of transport and delight which surprises an inhabitant of our humid country. As in summer every thing is parched and withered by the excessive heat; in autumn and winter on the contrary the rain descends, and the floods break forth in a manner of which we can form but a very inadequate idea.

This severity of the weather in winter seems to be inconsistent with the mode of living practised by Abraham, but that the custom of living in tents obtains in those countries at the present day, is a fact incontrovertibly established.

This custom may also appear to some to be inconsistent with the division of land, and with such a degree of population as subsisted even in the time of Abraham. That such numerous tribes of people, with those prodigious herds and flocks which Abraham and Lot possessed, could not follow such an erratic mode of life in these countries is sufficiently plain: but such is the amazing difference to be observed in different nations, that it actually continues at this day in some of the most populous parts of the East. We are assured by travellers of the first credibility, that in Palestine the custom of shifting their habitations, and driving their cattle from place to place, as pasture abounds or is scarce, prevails even at the present day, not only in those extensive commons called deserts, but even in the inhabited part of the country. The Kenites and Rechabites too, when the country was more populous than now, followed the same mode of life, and were able to declare in the days of Jeremiah—"We have obeyed the voice of Jonadab (the Son of Rechab,) our father, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters: nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed; but have dwelt in tents." Even in Egypt, the best inhabi-

ted country of the East, there are computed to be two millions of vagrant Arabs, who shift their quarters in the same manner, according to the state of the pastures or the season of the year.

It sometimes happened, however, that the members of families, with their servants, flocks and herds, became too numerous to be supplied from the same pastures and the same wells, and were obliged to migrate into different countries, which was easily effected, while they continued in this ambulatory mode of living. It was in general a matter of little consequence, whether they kept together or separated, after their households became numerous. Which of them should shift its habitation could seldom become a subject of dispute, since they were induced to part by the scarcity of provender or water. Both parties would be obliged to remove, and the only question was, which should go to the right and which to the left. When we consider the inconveniences which they suffered from remaining in one body, with the advantages and the facility of a separation, and take into the account the rapid multiplication of the human species in the pastoral state, when the hides, milk, and flesh of their cattle defied the consumption of the family, we shall readily perceive how speedily the face of the earth would be covered with inhabitants. Such an emigration, as I have spoken of, is the first material incident in the life of Abraham: and in the conduct of it, he displayed that urbanity, and generosity, which distinguished the remainder of his life. Abraham and his nephew Lot, had formed but one tribe, "till the land was not able to bear them; for their substance was so great, that they could not dwell together:" "and there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abraham's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle." Here was sufficient ground for a serious quarrel between the heads of the tribe. They had remained together, perhaps for sake of society, possibly for mutual defence against the Canaanite and Perizzite, who, we are told in the same passage, were then in the land. They were now become independent of each other. Riches, those incentives to pride, and war, had greatly increased. It was necessary that one of them should seem to yield to the other.

Their subjects were not disposed to live in amity, and had actually commenced hostilities. It might have been reasonably expected, that Lot would have proposed to give way to his uncle, his father's elder brother: but we are not told, that he intimated any such intention, though Abraham was his superior in wealth as well as primogeniture. What an edifying example, then, did Abraham set both to nations and individuals, by the termination of this contest, when he said, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right: or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Lot, instead of making a suitable return to this civility and generosity, "lift up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, even as the garden of the Lord, (or a beautiful garden) like the land of Egypt, as thou comest from Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan."

With the same gentle and disinterested temper did Abraham conduct himself in a similar dispute that arose between him and Abimelech king of Gerar, "because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away, and Abimelech said, I wot not, who hath done this thing; neither didst thou tell me; neither yet heard I of it, but to day. And Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them unto Abimelech, and both of them made a covenant: and Abraham set seven ewe lambs by themselves; and Abimelech said, what mean these seven ewe lambs? and he said, these seven ewe lambs shall you take of my hand, that they may be a witness to thee that I have digged this well." Thus this good man spontaneously purchased his own property, a well, which he had digged, rather than enter into any controversy at that time, and to prevent any possibility of dispute in time to come.

Let it not be supposed, that the mildness and condescension of Abraham arose from his inferiority, or his inability to exact his rights: for though Abimelech is styled a king, we find, that on a former occasion he had treated the Patriarch with distinguished respect; and

we know, that immediately before this transaction, he had earnestly solicited a favour from the father of the faithful, and treated him at least as an equal. The occasion of this meeting seems to have been a desire of the king of Gerar to engage Abraham in an amicable treaty, and to obtain a promise, that he would not only abstain from any violence against his dominions; but that he would guarantee them to his children and their heirs.—Gen. xxi. 22.

We have also a decisive proof both of the power and valor of Abraham in the expedition which he undertook, in order to rescue his kinsman Lot from the hands of Chedorlaomer king of Elam. As Nimrod established the first kingdom, so this expedition, in which Lot was taken prisoner, was perhaps the first war of which the world was witness, and certainly the earliest of which history has given us any information. While I am attempting to illustrate the character of Abraham and the manners of the patriarchal times, it may not, therefore, be improper to give an account of this unhappy precedent.

In reading the history of those primitive times, we are liable to misconception from the frequent mention of kings. Were we to understand this title as denoting potentates, possessed of extensive dominions, we should be surprised at reading, that Chedorlaomer was an Emperor of such power as to have command over eight tributary kingdoms, four of which had revolted, and were reduced to subjection by the assistance of the remainder: nor would our astonishment be lessened, when we heard, that this mighty monarch had been afterwards overthrown by Abraham, whose whole force did not exceed three hundred and eighteen men, born in his house, with such assistance as he could derive for a sudden excursion from his friends Mamre, Eshcol and Aner. But this, like many other difficulties in these early writings, receives an easy solution from the present state of those countries. Chedorlaomer was in fact an eminent chieftain, like the Arabian Emirs of the present day, who had a number of subordinate Chiefs under his command. Abraham was also a Chief of considerable rank, in alliance with three others; and his forces were rather superior to those commanded by the

Arabian Emirs of modern times. After the parting between him and Lot, the latter removed into a part of the country, which became the scene of war, and was carried off by the conqueror with the rest of the spoil. This calamity rekindled the affection of his uncle, who immediately collected his own forces and those of his friends, surprized the victorious army by night, threw them into confusion, and rescued his nephew with his family and cattle. So complete was his victory, that after pursuing for a considerable distance, he recovered all the plunder taken from the vanquished kings, such was his piety, that he ascribed all his success to the Most High God, possessor of Heaven and Earth; and such his generosity, that he swore to Melchisedech, I will not take from a thread even unto a shoe-latchet, and I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abraham rich; save only the meat, which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men that went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion. This enterprize exactly resembles the manner of conducting warfare among the wandering Arabs, who are enabled by the open nature of the country to fall suddenly, at night, upon the enemy, laden with booty; and afterwards effect a speedy retreat.

Hitherto we have found this illustrious patriarch a pattern of gentleness, disinterestedness, piety, friendship and valour; he next presents himself to our view in the subordinate but amiable character of hospitality and politeness.

Of his hospitality we have an instance in Genesis xviii. 3. "If now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, and I will fetch a morsel of bread and comfort your hearts; after that you shall pass on."

That his invitation was not words of course, like many modern compliments, he speedily evinced: "for he hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal: knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham himself



ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, and he hasted to dress it: and he took butter and milk, and the calf, which he had dressed, and set it before them: and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."

Among the other circumstances which distinguish the Eastern quarter of the world from these Western Regions, the most remarkable is, that, while Europe has been in continual fluctuation from the beginning of its history to the present extraordinary Era, either gradually changing the surface, or turned up from the bottom by furious tempests; while every generation has been witness either to a change of manners, a peaceable transfer of power, or a violent subversion of the most powerful states, Asia has preserved even her domestic customs from the beginning of time to the present day; and when undisturbed by the restless inhabitants of Europe, has maintained the limits of her Empires almost inviolate. This is remarkably illustrated by the similarity observed by modern travellers between the entertainment just described, and the culinary preparations of Palestine and Arabia in the present age. Every part of this patriarchal collation may be exemplified in the modern customs of that country, and particularly, its being taken under a tree, the materials of which it consisted, the baking of the bread on the hearth, and the attendance of Abraham on his guests. The circumstances of this repast might induce a person acquainted only with our manners, to form rather a mean idea of the dignity of Abraham, especially the part which he took in serving his guests, and that which his wife bore in baking the bread; but this would be a very erroneous conception; for it is well known, that even among the Greeks of the heroic ages, it was customary for the greatest Princes and Heroes to prepare food for themselves and their company. With respect to Abraham it is certain, that his mode of living agrees with that of a modern Emir; and that he was rich in silver and gold, which he had amassed, with cattle, and the produce of his flocks and herds. The more meanly, however, we think of his wealth, the more we must admire his hospitality. This is a virtue, which has been

always held in high estimation, often in much higher than it deserves; for its real value varies according to the circumstances of the age, in which it is practised. In such countries and times as those in which Abraham flourished, it is certainly a quality of the greatest worth: because it operates as Charity with respect to the poor, often relieves the rich from great inconveniences, and facilitates that intercourse between different nations or different portions of the same country, which is essential to their mutual accommodation and civilization, yet could not possibly begin or continue without the exercise of hospitality. But in countries which abound with inhabitants, and have already attained to a considerable degree of civilization and commerce, the accommodation of travellers ceases to be either possible or convenient to either of the parties; and the practice of one person in easy circumstances making an entertainment for persons equally independent with himself, however it may be attended with many very agreeable circumstances, is scarcely entitled to the appellation of Hospitality, though often adorned with the praises due to that virtue. The only instances, in which this custom is entitled to commendation are the attentions paid to strangers, continuing for a time in the place of our residence. By such attentions we may often discover persons of the most valuable characters, either moral and religious, or literary and intelligent. It is grateful to one who considers every thing human as in some degree connected with himself, to afford to such persons that comfort, society and assistance, which cannot be purchased with money: and a judicious exercise of this quality will frequently contribute not only to general philanthropy, but to the extension of our knowledge in the most useful arts. It might not be improper here to suggest some of those cautions by which it is necessary, that hospitality should be governed, and to depict some of those characters whose intimacy ought not to be cultivated: but this would be an invidious task, and protract this paper to too great a length; let it suffice, that no frivolous or superficial accomplishments should tempt you to extend your hospitality to persons of doubtful character, or to admit to your intimacy any but those

who are recommended by virtuous dispositions, or valuable acquirements. Beware of those vipers, who, after warming themselves on your hearth, or insinuating themselves into your bosoms, will sting you to the heart.

Among the features in the domestic characters of Abraham, some of which I pass over, as being equally destitute of instruction and abhorrent from the manners and morals of our days, he approved himself an affectionate husband, and a prudent father. His conduct on the death of his wife, and the marriage of his son, exhibits, perhaps, the most beautiful instances of primitive manners and simple narration any where to be found except in the writings of Moses. The elegant politeness of the conversation, which passed between Abraham and the Hittites concerning the purchase of a sepulchre for Sarah, and the beautiful narrative of his servant's expedition to procure Rebecca for Isaac, give us a very pleasing idea of the manners of that period of the world. The first is an additional proof of the disinterested liberality of Abraham: and the second is adorned with several characters beautifully delineated. The diligence, fidelity, and piety of the servant, the gentleness and obliging disposition of Rebekah, and the elegant incident of their finding Isaac "meditating in the field at the even-tide" are contrasted by the selfishness of Laban her brother. It was not till "he saw the ear-rings and the bracelets on his sister's hands, that he said to Abraham's servant, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house and room for the camels;" and he ungirded the camels, and gave them straw and provender, and brought water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him. The reader may recollect, how well the consistency of this character is preserved, by the manner in which Laban afterwards behaved to Jacob, his sister's son.

Notwithstanding such characters as these, which evince, that the historian copied from nature, and that mankind were the same from the earliest times, I could wish, that we had not lost so much of the patriarchal manners. The simplicity, piety, and candour of those

powerful shepherds, might deserve the imitation of men in a more advanced stage of civilization, and might, on a fair comparison, put to the blush the most fashionable in this polished era; as their noble frankness may be contrasted with the suspicious caution and unsocial reserve of commercial life, and even familiar intercourse. It might at least make us ashamed, that so short a time after the deluge, and in so rude a state of society, men should have excelled us in some of the most amiable and respectable virtues, as well as in those manners, which are the becoming ornaments of the most exalted rank, yet graceful and becoming in the meanest condition, and which thus assert their claim to be the genuine offspring of nature, and not the spurious progeny of vice and folly.

A liberal and serious consideration of that character, which I have endeavoured to sketch in this article, should also induce us to reflect on the wisdom of selecting Abraham as the stock, from which that wonderful plan was to spring, which occupies the books of the Old and New Revelation. It would be difficult to find in any age, a man more worthy of being distinguished by the favour of Heaven, and of being constituted the founder of that nation, which was to preserve the knowledge of God during the dark and savage periods which were to intervene before the manifestation of the Messiah. He well deserved to be celebrated with peculiar praises by St. Paul, in his catalogue of worthies, who "walked by faith and not by sight," for this was the crowning quality in the character of Abraham; and the most illustrious circumstance in his life, was his ready acquiescence and prompt obedience to the injunction of the Lord, to sacrifice his only son, the son of his old age and the heir of the promises. What a tumult of conflicting emotions must have agitated his bosom, and what perplexity between the future promises and the immediate command of God, apparently so inconsistent. (see Heb. xi. 17.) Such firm reliance on the justice and veracity of God, and ready compliance with the divine will, were justly reckoned to him for righteousness, for they evinced that he would never shrink from the performance of any duty, however arduous or revolting to his natural feelings.

He lived in continual dependance on God, and after 175 years, he gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. His memory is still held in renown at Urfah or Ur of Chaldees, and throughout all the East.

ERASMUS.

## MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS ON TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

HEB. viii. 1, speaks of our High Priest, Jesus Christ, as set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty, in the heavens: and consequently in his state of exaltation, not in his human nature—and in verse 2, he is still called, a *minister* of the sanctuary, &c. Can we suppose that the writer in using this language thought that Jesus was God Almighty himself? Heb. x. 12,—“But this man [Greek, *himself*] after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.”—compared with verse 21. “And having an high priest over the house of God.” Do not these verses, taken together, show that Christ in his exalted state is still an high priest over God’s house, and is not the very notion conveyed by this, inconsistent with complete equality in the persons of the Godhead?

Col. i. 15, “The image of the invisible God. The first-born of every creature.” Is not the first of these expressions the very same that is used in Genesis i. 27, in speaking of the state in which man was created, viz. in the image of God? It can, therefore, I think, by itself, prove no more of Christ than it could of Adam. If “the first-born of every creature” be the true translation, it is decisive. If not, still the expression will be of no use to our adversaries. If it mean, as they pretend, “born before the creation,” would Paul have ever thought of saying of a Being Infinite and *Eternal*, *merely* that he was *born* before the creation? Would it not sound like a dishonouring, a blaspheming of the Almighty, for any one among us to say of Him *merely* that we believe he came into being before any creature? and if this would be a dishonouring of one *Eternal* Being,



must it not be equally so of any other Being that is equally and essentially eternal?

Rom. xiv. 9. "For to this end Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living." Does it not seem to follow, from this, that if Christ had not died, &c., he would not have been Lord of the dead and the living: and as it was in his human nature only, according to Trinitarians, that he died, so it is in his human nature only, that he is thus exalted.

Phil. ii. 9. "Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, &c.," wherefore [i.e. because he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, (I take the received version, though obviously incompatible with the whole spirit of the passage,) because he made himself of no reputation, &c., because he became obedient to the death of the cross, (see preceding verses) for all these reasons] God exalted him, &c. It appears from all this, that after his resurrection he was made greater than before his humiliation. If then, before he humbled himself, he was equal in substance, power and glory, to Almighty God, he must, in his exalted state, be greater than He.

Rev. i. 1. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." This revelation or prophetic view of things shortly to come to pass, was given to Jesus Christ by God, and by our Lord to John, after he had ascended into heaven—after the churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, were founded—after the word of God had spread widely throughout Asia. It was not given either to or by our Lord in his human nature, for he had ascended to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. It must have been in his divine nature, then, that he revealed this to his servant John; but in this divine nature he is said to be equal to the Father, and yet the Father *gave* him this Revelation. How are these consistent? Jesus Christ had it not before God gave it to him, for if so, how could God be said to give it? God had it before he

could give it. The Father, then, had some knowledge of things to come, that the Son, in his divine nature, had not. If this be not superiority, what is? Could it be said that Jesus Christ gave to God a Revelation of things to come? Would not this sound blasphemous even to the ears of Orthodoxy? Why so, if both were equal in substance, power, and glory? Why is it that all Christians would revolt against exchanging this form of expression for the other, but that all Christians have a *feeling* of the superiority of the Father to the Son, that even the language of their creeds cannot remove.

Rev. i. 18, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for ever more, amen; and have the keys of Hell and Death." These are the words of the Son of Man—who was in his divine nature when he spoke, and must therefore have been in his divine nature when he died—for the identity of him that was dead, and him that spoke to John these words, is beyond dispute. But will Trinitarians admit, that an eternal, immutable, almighty person of the Godhead died, or do they not endeavour to make out that only the human nature of Christ died? Or if it were in his human nature that he died, then it is in his human nature that he liveth evermore and "searcheth the reins of the heart," then what becomes of the argument from this attribute of omniscience to prove his proper Deity?

Rev. iii. 14, "These things, saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God."

Those who strongly object to our employing Scripture against them in any but the literal sense of the translated words, cannot object to this text as a decisive assertion that Christ is not co-eternal with the Father: and it so happens that in this case the literal translation is perhaps as true a one as can be given. Some contend that the words mean "the Lord or ruler of God's creation," which may or may not be true, but does not mend the matter to Trinitarians. It is obviously strange language to say that an almighty and eternal person of the Godhead, is either the beginning of the creation of God, or that he is the Ruler of God's creation.

Rev. iii. 21, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne." Mark how completely this agrees with the Apostle's representation in Phil. ii. 9. Christ says that he is set down on his Father's throne because he overcame. "Being set down on his Father's throne" then implies some privilege, some honour enjoyed by the Son after his victory, which he had not before his humiliation. Either then he was not equal to the Father before he became incarnate, or he is now greater than the Father. Arians maintain the former, and we do not see how Trinitarians can consistently avoid the latter, or how they can admit it without blasphemy.

EREUNETES.

#### BISHOP TAYLOR ON LIBERTY OF JUDGMENT.

BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR, whose words it is delightful to quote, because of that most excellent grace of charity that pervades his writings, says, "that if we consider that we have no certain ways of determining places of difficulty and question [in the Scriptures] infallibly and certainly; but that we must hope to be saved in the belief of things plain, necessary, and fundamental; and our pious endeavours to find out God's meaning in such places, which he hath left under a cloud for other great ends, reserved to his own knowledge, we shall see a very great necessity in allowing a liberty in prophesying [interpretation] without prescribing authoritatively to other men's consciences, and becoming lords and masters of their faith." [Lib. of Proph. p. 102.]

"It is not," says the same author, in his admirable treatise on the Liberty of Prophecy, "the differing opinions that is [are] the cause of the present ruptures, but want of charity: it is not the variety of understandings, but the disunion of wills and affections; it is not the several principles but the several ends that cause our miseries; our opinions commence and are upheld according as our turns are served, and our interests are preserved, and there is no cure for us but piety and charity. A holy life will make our belief holy; if we consult not humanity and its imperfections in the

choice of our religion, but search for truth without designs save only of acquiring heaven, and then be as careful to preserve charity as we were to get a point of faith, I am much persuaded we should find out more truths by this means; or, however, which is the main object of all, we shall be secured though we miss them, and then we are well enough. For, if it be evinced that one heaven shall hold men of several opinions, if the unity be not destroyed by that which men call differing religions; and if an unity of charity be the duty of us all even towards persons that are not persuaded of every proposition we believe, then I would fain know to what purpose are all those stirs and great noises in Christendom; those names of faction, the several names of churches not distinguished by the divisions of kingdoms, but by names of sects and men? These are all become instruments of hatred; thence come schisms, and parting of communions, and then persecutions, and then wars and rebellions, and the dissolutions of all friendships and societies. All these mischiefs proceed not from this, that all men are not of one mind, for that is neither necessary nor possible; but that every opinion is made an article of faith; every article is a ground of a quarrel, every quarrel makes a faction, every faction is zealous, and all zeal pretends for God, and whatsoever is for God cannot be too much. We, by this time, are come to that pass; we think we love not God except we hate our brother, and we have not the virtue of religion unless we persecute all religions but our own, for lukewarmness is odious to God and man. That we, proceeding furiously upon these mistakes, by supposing we preserve the body, we destroy the soul of religion, and by being zealous for faith, or, which is all one, for that which we mistake for faith, we are cold in charity, and so lose the reward of both.

---

### THE APOCALYPSE.

(*Concluded from p. 407.*)

---

THERE is an interval before the sounding of the seventh trumpet, correspondent to that before the opening of the seventh seal; for nothing can be more methodical than the whole arrangement of this marvellous vision.

A mighty angel now appears, clothed with a cloud, a rainbow upon his head, and with a face as it were the sun. His right foot is planted upon the sea and his left on the dry land, and as he cries aloud, seven thunders utter their voices. But he was manifestly from his appearance a benignant messenger, and John is forbidden to record the mutterings of those sounds, which to a Hebrew ear augured the divine displeasure; for that displeasure, being only against the unconverted, ought to be forgotten in the approaching victory of the truth. The angel does not speak out the oracle he is entrusted with, but he holds it high in his hand in the form of a small book, and swears by 'him that liveth for ever and ever' that there shall be no longer delay. The common translation is, that 'there shall be time no longer.' But these are words that would not only have no application to the subject, but would have really no meaning at all; for there must be time, wherever there is thought and succession. Every thing must now be accomplished—that is his declaration. As the old nations were accustomed to speak of instruction as food, the seer is told to eat the small book, and on tasting it, he finds it both sweet and bitter; that is, he understands the contents of it to be of a mixed kind, disastrous and happy.

That there may be no doubt as to what city is the subject of the threatened ruin, the seer is bidden to measure the temple in it, and told that 'the holy city is to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles forty and two months.' We learn from various Jewish sources, that this space of time, or three years and a half, was used among them to denote an indefinite season of calamity—perhaps from the circumstances, that in the days of Maccabees, the temple was just so long polluted by the Syrian soldiery. A description follows of two faithful persons in Jerusalem, who withstand the prevailing disorders for a thousand two hundred and three score days, or the three years and a half. They are at length killed by the leader of that foul swarm which rose out of the abyss, and their bodies left exposed to insult; but are afterwards translated to heaven. This corresponds so well with what history tells us of the efforts of the two chief priests, who were at last overpowered by the factious zealots, and had their lifeless remains—a fright-



ful thing to a Jewish imagination—cast out to insult, that we may reasonably suppose their virtue and fate to be here commemorated. It is possible, however, that the whole is introduced merely to correspond to the style of the later prophets, and to give greater effect to the approaching catastrophe.

The seventh trumpet now speaks. Instead, however, of the sudden rushing down of any great calamity, voices of praise are heard through the whole heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.’ The gates of the most secret places of the Jewish temple fly back at the sound, and the very ark of the covenant which was to be looked upon but by a few even of the chosen people, is thrown open to the gaze of the whole world. But lightnings and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail indicate that this consummation is only to be effected through sorrows, and judgments on the ungodly.

This first scene of the main action of the piece, is to be concluded by a singular allegory. The intention of it is to represent the Christian church as proceeding from that of the Jews, at first weak and persecuted, but always remaining under a divine protection. This fact is pourtrayed in the most striking manner. The Jewish church appears in the form of a woman, ‘clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.’ The description is borrowed from Joseph’s dream in the book of Genesis, and the twelve stars are the twelve tribes of Israel. A dragon is lying in wait for her new-born child. He is of enormous stature, with seven crowned heads and ten horns. Seven and ten were favorite numbers with the Hebrews, and the crowns and horns denoted only majesty and strength. The little child is caught up to the heavenly throne, and the mother escaped into the wilderness, where she is sustained a thousand two hundred and three score days; that is, the three years and a half of tribulation, which have been already explained to be an enigmatical expression for an indefinite space of time. And now as the immortals have always been supposed, in the poetry of all languages, to take part in the fortunes of this lower world, there is war in heaven.

Michael, the fabled chief of the angelic host, is arrayed against Satan, the dragon, at the head of his infernal followers. As he casts down that 'accuser of the brethren,' another hymn of praise resounds through heaven. The vanquished fiend again pursues the woman, but she is preserved from his attacks for 'time, times, and half a time.'

This peculiar mode of numbering is taken from the book of Daniel, and means three years and a half; so that we have here the same number as before, only more ambiguously expressed. The enemy now turns from this object of his pursuit, and goes 'to make war with the remnant of those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ,' as they are scattered among all nations.

Here ends an important part of this wonderful vision. Judaism is overcome, or rather has ended in giving birth to the divine faith of the gospel. A new scene is to be disclosed, representing the prevalence of 'the word of the kingdom' over its Gentile adversaries, in the fall of Rome, the lordly seat of pagan empire and superstition.

The imagination of the seer now places him on the sea-shore, whose sands and waves have always been accounted as emblems of the multitude of the nations. A sea-monster rises out of the water. Upon his seven crowned heads is written the name of Blasphemy, and all the world wonders after the beast. This is paganism or idolatry. Power is given him for forty and two months; again the term of three years and a half, which has occurred so often before. He is aided by another monster coming up out of the earth. This latter one has the attributes of mildness and subtility, and represents the arts of the heathen priesthood. He commands that the image of the first beast shall be worshipped, and his mark received in the hand, or the forehead. This seems to allude to the worship of the emperor's image on the standards, and the marks with which the soldiers stamped themselves as bound to his service. The number of the name of the sea-monster is now given, according to the rule of a secret science, which was much studied among the later Jews. However clear it might have been to the first readers of the Apocalypse, it has long ceased to be so. The oldest

explanation of the name that has come down to us is perhaps the most satisfactory,—Roman.

In strong contrast to the unlovely sights just described, the Lamb now appears on Mount Zion, surrounded with an immense train of followers. A new song is sung in heaven. Three angels fly past announcing the gospel, and declaring at the same time that the hour of divine judgment is come, and that Babylon—under which name is meant Rome, the mistress of heathen superstition—is already ‘fallen, is fallen.’ The beautiful benediction on ‘the dead who die in the Lord’ is next pronounced. Then under the common figures of the reaping of a harvest and the treading of a wine-press, is shown forth the vengeance that is ready to come on the enemies of the truth.

As the overthrow of the Jewish adversary had been proclaimed by the blast of seven trumpets, so the destruction of the pagan oppressor is to be signified by seven angels, each bearing a vial filled with wo, to be poured out on the devoted city. The judgments which they contain, are again in imitation of the seven plagues of Egypt; and as the last vial is emptied, there comes a great voice out of the temple of heaven, saying, ‘It is done.’ The destruction of Rome is next prefigured by another similitude. A woman, with the mystical name of ‘Babylon the great’ written on her forehead, is seen sitting on a formidable beast. She is blazing in gems and scarlet, intoxicated with the blood of saints and martyrs, and holds a golden cup of abominations in her hand. Her shameful end is then described. That there may be no doubt as to the subject designated, it is expressly said that the woman is that great city on seven hills which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

An excessive obscurity has settled over the details of this part of the book. It is an obscurity which is to be dispelled, if at all, by reference to the history of the first seven emperors of Rome, and to the popular expectations of that time, and not by imagining any prediction of events then unborn. There is no need of mentioning either the difficulties or their attempted solution. We have room only to trace the strong outlines of the piece.

In the next chapter we emerge from this perplexity into language that is perfectly plain and clear. The proud and wicked city is burnt up, and 'made the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every hateful bird.' The kings of the earth, the merchants and seamen, look on from afar and take up a lament over her sudden ruin, in almost the very words that are used by Ezekiel in describing the downfall of Tyre. Then a mighty angel, throwing a rock into the sea, declares that, like that stone, she was sunk for ever, to be 'found no more at all.' The lamentation that has just been heard from the earth, is succeeded by hymns of praise from all the spirits in heaven, whither the scene is now transferred. Under the scriptural figure of a marriage feast is represented the union of the church to its head, and the Messiah is seen riding as a conqueror, followed by the celestial armies, under his title, 'The Word of God.' The sea-monster and the false prophet oppose him in vain. 'They are cast down, and sentenced to a lake of fire. Their whole host is destroyed, and devoured by the birds of prey, which had been already summoned, by an angel standing in the sun, to hover over the field. Satan, the arch enemy, is seized and confined for a thousand years, by which is probably meant a long but undefined season, that the church may have rest, and that it may be seen whether he will then give over his evil machinations. During that interval, the saints and martyrs are represented as restored to life and reigning with Christ on the earth. At its expiration, Satan is loosed, but unreclaimed by his punishment. He musters the wild nations of the unknown north, who were called among the Hebrews Gog and Magog, to fight against the believers and their cause. They are consumed by fire out of heaven, and their leader, the great deceiver, is sentenced as incorrigible to perpetual punishment.

A question arises here, which has from the beginning divided the church, and occasioned great controversy. Does the writer of the Apocalypse give the sanction of his venerable name to the Jewish dream of a millenium, or a literal reign of the Messiah on earth for a thousand years, in the company of his faithful people, who are to be raised for that very purpose from the dead? Or may we suppose that he is only sketching with a bold fancy the

triumph and peace of the flourishing days of the gospel? On this question two plain considerations suggest themselves, which, if they are not enough to decide it, at least deserve attention. The first is, that when we read the book of Revelation, we must remember that we are reading a poem—a poem of a very peculiar kind, and not a doctrinal work. The second is, that where all else is allegorical and symbolical, and no real thing is described from beginning to end, except what all is intended to illustrate—the triumphant progress and close of the gospel—we do not seem authorised to make an exception here. To interpret literally, is to interpret against the whole scope and spirit of the production.

Every enemy is now subdued, and the consummation of all things hastens on. This is the subject of the closing part of the vision. A white throne is set forth, and the heavens and earth vanish from the look of him who sits upon it. The dead, small and great, are given up from the sea and from all the receptacles of death, and stand before God. The books of human deserts are opened. The world is judged. The wicked receive their sentence. A description of the state of the blessed must conclude the whole. But how shall that be described? It is set forth under figures the most attractive and striking to a Jewish mind. There is a new world in the place of the heavens and earth that had fled away. A divine Jerusalem descends like a magnificent pageant from the skies, and a voice accompanies it as it comes down; ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain.’ The materials of this wondrous city are gems and precious stones. The river of Paradise flows through it, with the tree of life flourishing for ever on its banks. There is no temple in it, for the Lord himself is there. There is no light of sun or moon, for the source of all effulgence and glory sheds upon it his continual blessing. There reign the faithful for ever and ever.

The seer closes his book with an irregular epilogue, of which the leading object is to exhort believers to faithfulness, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the heavenly



city. We have thus endeavoured to unfold the meaning of this mystical book. In laboring to be short, we may have been obscure. Let us repeat, then, some of the points that seem to have been established. The Apocalypse is not the prophetical book, that it is commonly supposed to be. It contains no prediction of particular historical events. It is not the original and peculiar book that it at first seems to be; for its imagery is borrowed from the Hebrew writers, especially the latest of them, and its strain of thought resembles closely that of the writer's nation and time. It is not an incoherent book, as has often been supposed, but on the contrary is arranged with the nicest skill and method. It is not an useless book; for though sealed as it were with seven seals, enigmatical and dark, it contains some of the noblest passages of holy writ. It utters christian truths, though in the language of symbols. It has a deep foundation of reality under its splendid fictions. The effect of the whole should be to lift up the heart as with a hymn to that Eternal Providence, which reveals itself through so many channels, instructs us by so many signs, and mixes and ends all its visitations of judgment with hopes of mercy. Its very imagery suggests a multitude of the most interesting associations. The city and tabernacle of God, coming down out of heaven, fill us with the hope of that day when all the sorrows of men shall have gone by. And who can read of those seven angels preparing themselves to sound, without reflecting that there are other angels with other trumpets which they are preparing to blow over the busy scenes of human interests and fortunes, and over the clods of the low valley where all those interests and fortunes will lie buried? Here is no fiction. It is the course of nature. It is the decree of God. Change—death—judgment—such are the thrilling tones which those trumpets will speak with. Ought we not to be as ready to hear as the divine ministers are to sound them.

---

#### MORNING PRAYER.

BY MISS CARTER.

O God, my merciful Father, I humbly thank thee for preserving me in safety the past night, for the refreshing sleep I have enjoyed, and raising me in health and peace to the enjoyment of a world which thou hast made

so beautiful, and in which thou hast allotted me such innumerable mercies. I bless thee for all the comforts of my life; for health, and kind friends; I beg of thee to bless and reward them and make me grateful to them. Under a sense of my own weakness, I beg the assistance of thy holy spirit to enable me to resist the dangerous temptations and bad examples of the world, the wrong dispositions of my own heart and temper. I humbly beseech thee to take me under thy protection—Keep me, O Lord, from presumption and vanity. Impress on my soul a constant regard to that awful account of all my thoughts, words, and actions, which I must give to thee at the awful day of judgment. Grant me a firm persuasion that all my peace of mind here, and my happiness hereafter, must depend on my improvement in piety, and in the duties of a christian life. Teach me to rely with perfect confidence upon thee, who alone knowest what is truly good for me, and dispose me to cheerful contentment in whatever condition thou seest fit to place me. I beseech thee to guard me this day from all danger, particularly from the greatest of all evils, the doing any thing displeasing to thee.

I humbly offer up all my petitions in the name and through the intercession of my blessed Redeemer, who has taught me when I pray to say—O Father.

---

## THE DUTY AND MANNER OF BEING USEFUL IN SOCIETY.

BY MISS TALBOT.

“BLESSED are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” How greatly do we all of us need this blessing; poor guilty creatures, who are every day provoking Almighty power and perfect justice? How then shall we be merciful as we ought? Can this duty be practised by any but the great or the injured? In relieving the distrest, or in pardoning offenders? Yes; every one of us may practise it every day we live. It is a great mistake to think there is no superiority but that which rank and fortune give. Every one of us may, in something or other, assist or instruct some of his fellow-creatures; for the best of the human race is poor and needy, and all have a mutual dependance on one another: there is no-

body that cannot do some good ; and every one is bound to do all the good they can. It is by no means enough to be rightly disposed to be serious and religious in our closets : we must be useful too and take care, that as we reap numberless benefits from society, society may be the better for us. It is a false and indolent humility, that makes people sit still and do nothing, because they will not believe they are capable of doing much ; for every body can do something—every body can set a good example, be it for many or for few. Every body can in some degree encourage virtue and religion, and discountenance vice and folly. Every body has some one or other whom they can advise or instruct, or in some way help to guide through life. Those who are too poor to give alms, can yet give their time, their trouble, their assistance in preparing or forwarding the gifts of others, in considering and representing distressed cases to those who can relieve them, in visiting and comforting the afflicted. Every body can offer up their prayers for those who need them, which, if they do reverently and sincerely, they will never be wanting in giving them every other assistance that it may please God to put in their power.

C. T.

---

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—Will you have the goodness to give me some information relative to the opinions entertained by you respecting the Death of Christ ? During his sojourn on this earth, he afforded us the example of a pure and sinless life, such as no man can hope to follow. This of itself would have announced him as a teacher sent from God, but when considered in connexion with his miraculous powers, forms a mass of evidence that would carry conviction in its train. Now what object was accomplished by his suffering a painful death, or how did he thereby further our salvation more than he had previously done in the course of a life devoted to the interests of men both temporal and eternal ? Yours, &c.

Oct' 5.

DUBITANS.

## REPLY.

In reply to the above from "Dubitans," we have to remark, that a few pages in a periodical would not be sufficient to give a full answer to his inquiries; but we will select some particulars that may serve to remove the objections that he feels to exist against Divine Providence allowing so sinless and holy a person to be subjected to such sufferings and cruelty in his death, as were allotted to Christ.

Dubitans will observe that the difficulty which he states is not peculiar to the case of Christ. It applies to every one of the many instances of holy persons being subjected to accumulated privations and distresses, after their faith and patience had, to our view, been sufficiently tried; while so many wicked and ungodly men pass through life smoothly, prosperously, and to outward appearance, happily. The difficulties we conceive to be the same in kind, though different in degree. We must, perhaps, acknowledge, that we are not allowed, in either case, to comprehend all the purposes of Divine Providence; but in both cases we may be permitted to guess at some probable reasons.

If this be a state of trial, there must be difficulty or suffering, to constitute our probation. It is true that prosperity is itself one of the most difficult of trials, that proves more frequently fatal than either adversity or pain. But this arises partly from the contrast, and from there being distress and poverty to admit of relief being granted or withheld. Who are to be tried with prosperity and who with adversity—who with pleasure and who with pain—who with enjoyment and who with suffering, must be determined by the All-wise Governor of all things, and without knowing all the circumstances of the case, we cannot form any correct estimate, or come to a fair conclusion. This is as much as to say, that we can never, in this mortal state, reconcile all the apparent difficulties, and even inconsistencies, in these dispensations.

There seems to be one law of Providence that will serve to remove some of his difficulties. No great and permanent good has ever been accomplished for the human race, without considerable pain bodily or mental, and very generally both together, on the part of the agent employed. It does not seem to be enough that there should

exist a pure and disinterested benevolence—earnestness of zeal, and uprightness of intention—there must also be very considerable exertion—often great suffering and labour and anxiety in the agent; and thus he who may be least deserving of pain and trouble, will be suffering all the inconvenience, and many who deserve to meet with tribulation and sorrow will be reaping unspeakable advantages from his exertions.

We think that no one who takes a view of human life, can doubt this. And if our Correspondent reflect upon these considerations, and enlarge upon them in his own thoughts, he will find what he considers most objectionable in a considerable degree removed, or, what comes to the same thing in most of similar cases, reduced to a class of events, that however inexplicable, have never been held to militate against a good and gracious Providence. If he follow up these reflections, and bring them to bear on the particular case of Christ, he will find that the exhibition of a pure and sinless life in connexion with his miraculous powers, would not have been sufficient for effecting the purposes of his mission. On the contrary, if these causes had been left to act uniformly with similar causes in other instances, the Gospel of Christ would never have made any extensive progress, and in all human probability, never have survived the destruction of Jerusalem.

The benevolent purposes of Christ's coming, then, required proportionable exertion, and could not have been carried into effect any where, still less among the Jews, without considerable anxiety and suffering. Why that particular kind of trial and course of suffering was required, we may, it is presumed, leave among the secret things of the Most High that we cannot fully explain.

Dubitans might have been assisted by several passages of Scripture in finding out another solution of his difficulty. Christ's present state of glorification is one of exaltation, obtained as a reward. He will find this more particularly stated in Philippians ii. 8, 9. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became *obedient* unto death, even the death of the cross; *wherefore* God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name." He was exalted in reward of his obedience, and if there were no difficulty or labour in that obedience, we cannot see how it could



be a reason for his exaltation. On the other hand, the greater the difficulties and the trials attending on his obedience, and more particularly the necessity of perseverance unto death, would all become reasons for greater exaltation. If Christ had not been called on to endure the cross, he could not have despised the shame for which he was rewarded with being set down at the right hand of God. We are to observe, too, that this exaltation for which he strove in his obedience, was not a mere selfish one—that his followers were to enjoy the benefits of it—for by it he has obtained his ability to save those that come to God by him. If this, then, were the purpose of Providence in accordance with that system of mediation that runs through all things, we see clearly “how Christ by his sufferings and death could further our salvation more than he had previously done, in the course of a life devoted to the interests of men, both temporal and eternal.”

Subordinate to these more important purposes of his sufferings and death, we can readily see, that if our Lord had prosecuted his benevolent plans in peace, without that contradiction of sinners which he endured, and have come to a peaceful termination of his life, there would have been a vast diminution of the irresistible evidence that we now have of his resurrection. Every one can see how much strength the evidence acquires, from the simple fact of Christ being in the power of his enemies—to secure his death by such violence as could not fail—in such a public way as could not be denied—to have him buried in so marked a place—so well guarded—all too at so public a time, when every part of the execution of their dread purpose was witnessed by thousands, so that there was no possibility of denial afterwards, with the very mode of proving his identity with the crucified Jesus to Thomas afterwards. All these are collateral advantages which we should not underrate, because we cannot tell, amidst the varieties of intellect in the human race, how many may have been brought over to the faith in Christ, so as to save their souls forever by some one of these particulars, that would not have been influenced by all the others taken together. We cannot enlarge more upon these points at present, but we trust we have done more than enough to remove our correspondent's doubts. EDITOR.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR—I send you some papers, partly extracts and partly abstracts, of writings by Dr. Isaac Watts—I have not his works in my possession, and cannot therefore compare them. They were made some years ago without any view to printing—I am sure there are no intentional perversions of the Author's meaning, and I should hope that the statement of his views will be found to be accurate. I remain, W.

# EXTRACTS, &c.

SHOWING SOME OF THE RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF DR. ISAAC WATTS.

DR. WATTS gives the following opinions as to the idea which the disciples had of Christ:—

1. They firmly believed that he was sent of God—  
“They have believed that thou didst send me.”
2. They were convinced that he was the true Messiah.
3. That he had a peculiar and glorious relation to God,  
“that he was the Son of the living God.”
4. They believed also that he had an existence before he came into this world.

5. They believed also that God was in a most eminent and peculiar manner present with him according to the multitude of expressions he had used to that purpose of his father's being with him, and dwelling in him. But they did not seem to have any fixed and certain belief of such a peculiar and personal union of the man Christ Jesus with the true God during his lifetime, as to give him the name and title of God.

In answer to the inquiry, What evidence they gave of believing his true Deity? he says,

1. Upon some occasions they *worshipped* him, but he admits that this [worshiping] signifies no more than a great degree of humility in the manner of their petition, perhaps a bowing of the knee, or falling on the face at his feet? and that this word is sometimes used in Scripture, referring to moral and civil honours paid to our fellow-creatures: and in recounting several instances of worship, particularly that of the leper who was cleansed, he says, that it may be observed, that the cleansed leper first glorified God, as the Great Author and first cause of his healing, and then fell down on his face in a worshipping posture at the feet of Christ to give him thanks

as the glorious means and miraculous instrument of his deliverance, not knowing that Christ who healed him was himself the true God ; and concludes that these persons did not seem to worship our Lord as the true and Eternal God, with proper divine worship.

2. Simon Peter was greatly surprised at the multitude of fishes taken at once when he let down his net at the direction of Christ. When he saw it he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord ; which expression may seem to import, "Thou art so holy and pure, O Lord, that such a poor sinful wretch as I am have too much defilement in me to come so near thee, and may have just reason to dread thy presence." Whether, says Dr. W., he might at this season have an overwhelming glimpse of his divinity, it is not easy to say ; but it may be easily said, that this much alone was not sufficient to give a just convincing proof of his Godhead.

3. The Apostles seem to make a petition to Christ for spiritual mercies in a way of divine worship, and the Apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith, which address seems to me to have more the appearance of religious worship paid to him by them than any other expression I know of before the resurrection of Christ ; though he admits, in a few lines after, that these words might only show their belief that God had given him spiritual power over their souls, and that he was commissioned to exercise this power (even as he commissioned his disciples to heal the sick) and to forgive sins, though he were not in his own nature the true and eternal God, as the multitude marvelled and glorified God, who had given such power unto men. And in the other case which Dr. Watt brings forward, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," he remarks, that the mere sudden expression of this request will hardly prove the poor man was convinced of the godhead of Christ.

4. The disciples may seem to own his omniscience, John xvi. 30. "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things"—but probably at that time they understood this "all things" in a limited sense, as 2 Samuel xiv. 20, when the woman said the same thing to David, "And my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God to know all things that are in the earth." So, 1 Jn.

ii. 20, "Ye have an unction and know all things." For the utmost inference that the disciples make from it was, that Jesus came forth from God, not that he was God himself. It may be another reason also, says he, to think the disciples understood this word, "all things" in a limited sense, because Christ had told them but a very little before this time, that he himself did not know the day of judgment.

5. They believed that he was the Messiah, and though Dr. W. thinks that the Messiah is spoken of in the Old Testament as God, he admits that the learned doctors of that age did not believe the true deity of the Messiah, nor did the Apostles themselves, before the death of Christ, apply them in that sense.

6. They believed and confessed him to be the son of God. But this title, he thinks, does not necessarily amount to any more than a glorious likeness to God, a nearer and more peculiar relation to God.

Dr. W. admits "That there are expressions that seem to intimate a nature inferior to God belonging to Christ before he came in the flesh, and brings several considerations to prove this point. These considerations I will now give ; but from the length to which they extend am obliged to omit the illustrations in support of his propositions :—

Consideration 1. Christ is represented as his father's messenger, minister, or angel, that was a distinct being from his father, sent by his father to perform such actions and such services for his people, long before his incarnation, some of which seem too low for the dignity of pure Godhead.

2. Christ when he came into this world is said to empty and divest himself of some glory which he had before his incarnation in several places of Scripture. Now, if nothing but his divine nature existed before this time, this divine nature could not properly empty or divest itself of any glory. Therefore it must be his inferior nature or human soul which did then exist and divest itself of its ancient glory for a season.

3. That very being which came down from heaven and was sent of God into the world, is represented as capable of having a will different from the will of God the Father, and therefore it must be *inferior to God-head*.

4. Christ represents his own coming into the world, and being sent hither by the Father, in such a manner as naturally leads one to suppose he had a real and proper dwelling in another place, and in another manner, before he came into the world, and that he then changed his place and company and manner of life—all which seem more agreeable to a human spirit than to a divine person.

In enlarging on the Scripture proofs of the foregoing propositions, he is led to comment on Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of man."

"It is," says Dr. Watts, "the chief design of this Scripture to propose to the Philippians a wondrous example of humility and self-denial. Now, a great and pious writer of this age has observed, that we never find the divine nature or Godhead propounded to us as an example of self-denial or humility, in all the Bible; though God commands our conformity to himself in holiness, love and beneficence. Therefore it must be some inferior nature, or Christ's human soul, that is proposed as an example of humility and self-denial, and a glorious example it was, when it divested itself of such a godlike form, and such a pre-existent glory. Christ's being in the form of God cannot here necessarily signify his Godhead, because it is represented as inconsistent with the state of his humiliation; for he seems to put off this form of God, or he emptied himself of it and put on the opposite form, viz. the form of a servant, when he became incarnate, or was made in the likeness of men; but it is plain that he could not put off his godhead when he became incarnate. Besides, the form of God can never be proved to signify his divine nature in this place, for there is no expression like it in Scripture that signifies proper divinity. Nor indeed does *μορφη* properly signify nature or essence any where in the Bible that I can find, but only appearance, shape, or likeness. Observe also—that the condition of our Saviour whilst on earth, though it was always mean, yet was not properly that of a servant, and consequently since his *being*



*in the form of a servant* cannot possibly signify more than his acting sometimes as a servant, though he was not such by condition of life, it is plain that his being in the form of God cannot possibly signify his being by nature the very God. And on 2 Cor. viii. 9, Ye know the grace of the Lord, Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, he makes the following remarks—"It cannot be said of God or the divine nature, that he became poor who is infinitely self-sufficient, and who is necessarily and eternally rich in perfections and glories, and in the indefeasible possession of all things: nor can it be said of Christ as man that he ever was rich, if he were never in a richer state before than while he was here on earth; for during that time he was always extremely poor. But if to evade this any one will say, that he was rich as God, and became poor as man, Bishop Fowler answers that this is such a strain and force upon the words of Scripture, that it looks like laying hold on any thing to help at a dead lift. It appears, then, that our Lord Jesus Christ really emptied himself of some peculiar glories that belonged to him, and which he possessed in a pre-existent state before he came to dwell in our world, and to take flesh upon him.

---

#### ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—I send you a commencement of a series of illustrations of Scripture, particularly the Old Testament. I have taken the Book of Isaiah first, but not with any intention of going regularly through it by way of comment, for this, I am afraid, would prove tedious. At the same time I think that a portion of your pages would be very profitably devoted to Scripture criticism, and the dissemination of those explanations of obscure passages which are contained in books not generally accessible, and not resorted to sufficiently by those who have access to them. Most readers of the Bible must pass over large portions without having any idea of the meaning of the language. This arises in many instances from the defective state of Hebrew literature, at the time when the translation was made, and often from the allusion contained, being so remote from what takes

place in modern times and countries of a different temperature and people of totally different habits, that it is impossible they should be understood without the information to be gleaned from commentators or travellers. There have of late years been several books of travels printed, from which extracts might be made illustrative of Scripture scenery or modes of life, and some of your correspondents might be usefully employed in making such selections.

In the illustrations which I now send, I have made mention of the Chaldee paraphrases. These paraphrases originated in the change or corruption of the Hebrew language into the Chaldee, during the 70 years captivity. The Jews had to learn the language of their masters or the Chaldees, and they forgot their own. They had retained the Hebrew during their sojourning in Egypt, because they lived together in one body in the land of Goshen; but in the captivity they were dispersed, and could not keep up intercourse in their native tongue. At least those in the more humble walks of life could not: but the old men and persons of education still retained the Hebrew, and therefore the later prophets were not under the necessity of writing in the new dialect. But targumim or Chaldee paraphrases became necessary to enable the people to understand whatever is read out of the word of God in the Synagogue on the Sabbath day. "The Targums, (says Dr. Gerrard,) or Chaldee Paraphrases, took their rise from the custom which was introduced after the captivity, when the Jews had forgotten the Hebrew language, of subjoining to the portions of S. S. read in their synagogues, an explanation in Chaldaic, which had then become their vernacular tongue. For a considerable time, these explanations were not probably committed to writing; then they began to write the ordinary glosses on the more difficult texts, and afterwards by collecting these and filling them up, they completed targums on whole books, but at what time is uncertain."

I must also premise, that I have not Lowth's Isaiah at hand, and am therefore unable to judge how far the remarks that I have given from other sources coincide with his sentiments.

I remain, &c.

V. D. M.

Chap. i. v. 3.—The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

The purport of this comparison is to represent the stupidity and insensibility of the Israelites in not making that acknowledgment to God, that even the most stupid animals usually return to their owners. St. Jerome thus explains the verse: "The meaning is plain. 'I have adopted them [the children of Israel] for my children—I have made them my peculiar people—the rod of my inheritance, and I have called them first-born, and they have not done what brute animals would do—they have not shewn that they could be overcome with kindness, and know their shepherd and their feeder.' Nor does he compare them to dogs, the most sagacious of animals, who would defend their master's dwellings for a small portion of food; but to animals of duller sensibility the ox and the ass employed in doing laborious works, and carrying heavy burdens for man." See Jer. viii. 7, where you have a similar form of speech, but the animals are different.

Ver. 5.—Why should you be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, (v. 6) from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores: they have not been closed nor bound up, nor mollified with ointment.

This is a good example of the figurative style of the prophets. The nation of Israel is represented as an individual man. The visitations of the Almighty throughout the history of the Israelites in order to punish them for idolatry and preserve them from it, are represented by the corporal punishment of the individual so frequent and so severe as to leave the whole body full of welts and sores, thus strongly expressing the hopelessness of reformation on the part of the people.

Ver. 8.—And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.

"The daughter of Zion" is another figurative expression of the same import with the last, meaning the city of Jerusalem with its inhabitants. Thus in chap. 47, v. 1. Babylon is addressed, 'O virgin daughter of Babylon and Chaldea,' 'daughter of the Chaldeans.' So likewise in chap. 23, v. 12, 'O thou oppressed virgin daughter of Zidon,' and in several other places.

Jerusalem being left as a cottage in a vineyard is an expression that does not convey to us, the inhabitants of a northern climate, the allusion intended by the prophet. But this cottage was a temporary shed or arbour, formed to shade and shelter those who were appointed to watch the vines; which was allowed to go to decay as soon as the vine-gathering was complete, and there was no further occasion for watchmen. Of the same use was the lodge in the garden of cucumbers, which was esteemed a delicious fruit. Both these, then, were very suitable emblems of the deserted and ruinous condition of the Holy City.

From the 10th to the 15th verse inclusive, we have one of those forcible declarations of the utter uselessness of mere sacrifices, or any other ceremonies for obtaining the favour of God, which the prophets were commissioned to set forth, in order to correct the prevalent tendency to rest entirely on the outward act.

Ver. 16-18.—Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

This is a very strong testimony against the Calvinistic doctrines; for there is here recognized in direct opposition to the doctrine of the utter impotence of human nature, and its incurable disposition towards every thing bad, a power in the Israelites to wash and make themselves clean, &c. or in other words to abandon their sinful ways, and reform their vicious practices; a power of ceasing to do evil and of learning to do well, without any supernatural aid. And there is also recognized a means of being reconciled to God without his requiring a full satisfaction for all the sins that had been committed. For when the Lord says, "Come now, and let us reason together:" he means by *now*, after they had washed and made themselves clean, and so forth. If they came to him in that state, their former sins should be forgiven. The Chaldee paraphrase gives this turn to the verse.—"Then, when ye shall return to my law, ye shall supplicate forgiveness, and I will attend to your supplication."

Ver. 22, 23.—“Thy [i.e. the City of Jerusalem's] silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water. Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves. Every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards [i.e. bribes.]

We have here an example of another peculiarity in the style of the prophet. He first conveys his meaning figuratively. He then takes up the very same idea, and expresses it directly. The silver means the nobles and princes of the land, and so does the wine; and the dross in the one case, and the adulteration with water in the other, represent that degeneracy in character and conduct that is more fully set forth immediately after. The same peculiarity runs through the 25th and 26th verses.

Ver. 27. “Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.”

The sense of the passage is not well expressed by this translation. The Chaldee paraphrase thus explains it, “Zion will be freed [or will preserve itself,] when just judgment shall be exercised in it.” Another Jewish Commentator—“Because there shall be in her [i.e. in Zion,] persons who practice justice, she shall be redeemed from her iniquities.” Kimchi, a very eminent Rabbinical writer—“By means of the righteousness which they have done, those who have been banished will return to her.” The phrase translated “her converts,” is thought by some to mean those who come back after the captivity. The Chaldee Paraphrase gives the meaning, “those who observe the law will return to her in purity.” The sense of the passage then seems to be, that Zion will be delivered from her sinful state by the righteousness or justice of those who are mentioned in the preceding verse; and those who turn back from their evil way, will be delivered by righteousness. Those who think the return from captivity to be alluded to, explain it as follows—That the Israelites being reformed and corrected by their exile and captivity, will again obtain the favour of God. 30, 31.

Ver. 29, “For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water. And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.”

The change of person that takes place here, is not uncommon in Hebrew poetry. The oaks of which they



were to be ashamed, some take to mean the idols—formed of this wood—but it is more probable that allusion is made to the gardens and groves in which idolatrous practices were carried on. There is a beautiful transition here from the 29th to the 30th verse. They were to be ashamed of the oaks and of the gardens in which they had carried on their idolatrous practices, and their punishment for thus violating God's law is represented by their becoming like an oak whose leaf fadeth, and a garden that hath no water—both striking emblems of misery and decay in oriental countries, and aptly representing the judgment of the Almighty that would befall a nation that had perverted his ways, and followed after other gods. The peculiar beauty of the passage in a poetical point of view, lies in the easy, appropriate, and expressive transition from the oak groves and gardens where the offence was committed, to the withered oak and parched garden, emblematical of their punishment.

Verse 31 is not happily translated. The Chaldee Paraphrase gives the meaning much better. “And the strength of the wicked shall be as tow, and the work of their hands as a spark of fire, which when brought into contact both burn. So shall the wicked be consumed and their ungodly deeds, and there shall be no pity for them.

Chap. II. This chapter begins with that beautiful prophecy of the Messiah's times, which has been often imitated, but never surpassed, or even equalled in the richness and aptness of its poetical images. It deserves to be remarked, that Micah, in the beginning of his fourth chapter, has precisely the same words—which would seem to prove that they were both reciting a prophecy known at the time, for they were cotemporaries.

And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself : therefore forgive them not.

This has at first a strange appearance, as if humility, instead of being one of the strongest recommendations to the Divine favour, shown an unpardonable offence. This arises from not inserting the reason of the great man humbling himself ; for when we find that both the mean man and the great were humbling themselves and bowing down, not to God, but to these same idols, the work of their own hands, and which their fingers had

made, we see the propriety of the sentiment at once. The same meaning is brought out by another translation. "The mean man shall be brought low, and the great man shall be humbled, and thou shalt not forgive them."

(*To be continued.*)

P. S.—I subjoin from one of the ephemeral penny-worths, an illustration of a passage in the New Testament, that I think worth preserving.

The Rev. John Hartley, who has travelled as a missionary in Greece, records in his Journal the following interesting Scriptural illustration:—"Having had my attention directed last night to the words, (John x. 3,)—*The sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name, &c.*, I asked my man if it was usual in Greece to give names to sheep. He informed me that it was, and that the sheep obeyed the shepherd when he called them by their names. This morning I had an opportunity of verifying the truth of this remark. Passing by a flock of sheep, I asked the shepherd the same question which I put to my servant, and he gave me the same answer. I then bade him to call one of his sheep. He did so, and it instantly left its pasturage and its companions, and ran up to the hand of the shepherd, with signs of pleasure, and with a prompt obedience which I had never before observed in any other animal. It is also true of the sheep in this country, *that a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.* The shepherd told me that many of his sheep are still WILD; that they had not yet learned their names; but that by teaching they would all learn them. The others which knew their names, he called TAME."

---

#### HISTORY OF WILLIAM ROBERTS, OF MADRAS.

IN order to make those of our readers that may not have heard of WILLIAM ROBERTS, who is mentioned in the following extract, better acquainted with this extraordinary person, we prefix an account of him that was published in 1818, as an introduction to a letter written by him to the Unitarian Society:—

"The author of this letter appears to have been born in very low circumstances; and having lost both his parents

when he was about nine years of age, he was kidnapped by a wicked Mahometan, to whom he had applied for protection, and sold by him as a slave. His master being an Englishman, and captain of a merchant vessel, took him several coasting voyages; and the sailors being chiefly Mussulman Lascars, convinced him of the absurdity of his native idolatry, and converted him to the Mahometan faith, without however giving him much instruction or teaching him the Koran; in which the doctrine of the divine Unity is so explicitly and strongly inculcated, that, had he been well instructed in it, he thinks, no consideration would have induced him to have embraced a Trinitarian creed, or to have become a Christian. This he records as a very happy circumstance.

“Providentially, this poor youth fell into very good hands; and his kind master dying in a few years afterwards, left orders in his will that he should be set at liberty, and that his wages should be fully paid up to the day when he obtained his freedom.

“He now entered into the service of his late master’s executor, who was also captain of a merchant-ship; and who having occasion to return to Europe, persuaded his Tamul servant to accompany him. In this gentleman’s family he was instructed by his fellow-servants in the Christian religion, according to their views of it: he learned the English language that he might be able to read the Bible; and the style of his letter shows to what degree he has succeeded in his application to this object. Having embraced Christianity, he was baptized in St. James’s church, Piccadily, A.D. 1789, when he took the name of William Roberts. His godfather was a very worthy and humane African Christian, whose name was Butler; and who afterwards most kindly protected and supported him when, being dismissed from service, and having lost his passage to India, he wandered about the streets of this Christian metropolis, poor and destitute, and without a friend.

“In the following season, however, Roberts found an opportunity of returning to Madras in the service of a gentleman, in whose family he continued to reside as butler for some years. And having much leisure and little society, he devoted himself to the study of the Bible and the Common Prayer-Book, which were the only

books he had brought out with him from England, and which he valued as his greatest treasure. But having a reflecting turn of mind, he soon encountered difficulties which puzzled him very much, and made him very uneasy. His judgment was first staggered by the Athanasian Creed: That three should be one, and one three, was, as he observes with much *naïveté*, “a thing too hard for him to make anything of.” The next difficulty was the doxology, “to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,” the response to which is, “As it was in the beginning,” &c., though he could find no example of it in the New Testament. Still, however, his faith did not waver, nor had he any suspicion that the Bible taught one doctrine, and the Common Prayer-Book another. He imputed his incapacity to reconcile them, to his own ignorance, to his imperfection in the English language, and to his want of an enlightened instructor. He was even ashamed to avow his difficulties. Notwithstanding which they continued to press on his mind, and to diminish the pleasure he took in the study of the Scriptures.

“While Roberts continued in this state of mind, fortunately for him his master had occasion to return to England in the year 1793. He took Roberts with him, and remained in London seven months. When he was about to return, one of Roberts’s fellow-servants (who had been a hearer of Dr. Priestley,) one evening read some passages to him from a small religious tract; which he afterwards took up, and turning over the leaves, he found at the end an advertisement of a book published by Mr. Lindsay, entitled a “List of False Readings and Mis-translations of the Scriptures.” The title struck him, and the next morning he hastened to Johnson’s to purchase the tract. Upon the perusal of it, nothing could equal his astonishment and delight to find that his doubts were not without foundation, that others had felt and expressed the same; and in short, that “the doctrine of the Trinity,” though taught in the Common Prayer-Book, “was not the doctrine of the Bible.” And the “ardour of his Bible study,” as he expresses it, “now returned with redoubled vigour.” He now began to consider “the Bible only as the rule of his faith and practice.” And having procured Mr. Lindsay’s

Reformed Prayer-Book, and a few other tracts of his and Dr. Priestley's, he returned to Madras "full of joy on his new discovery," in the year 1794.

"Soon after his return, he was hired as a butler in Mr. Harington's family at Madras, where he remained at Christmas, 1816. During this time having also procured a Tamul Bible from Tramquebar, he continued to devote himself to the study of the Scriptures, and to the instruction of those of his countrymen who were willing to learn. And having an opportunity in the year 1797 of obtaining some books from London, he procured the following works, which show both that Roberts was well-advised, and that he is a man of no ordinary mind: viz. Dr. Priestley's History of the Corruptions of Christianity; his Letters to Dr. Horsley; his History of Early Opinions concerning Christ; his Harmony of the Evangelists; Mr. Lindsay's Apology and Sequel; his Examination of Robinson's Plea; Dr. Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity; Sale's Koran; Brandt's History of the Reformation; and some other books. He also procured and read the works of some Trinitarian writers, which, however, were by no means satisfactory to his mind.

"In the year 1806 he had another opportunity of visiting London, in attendance upon Mrs. Harington and her children.—His stay then was very short, not more than forty days: but he availed himself of the opportunity of enriching his library with the addition of Dr. Priestley's Church History; his Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion; his Notes on all the Books of the Scripture; his Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos; Mr. Lindsay's First and Second Addresses to the Youth at Oxford and Cambridge; his Conversations on Christian Idolatry; Dr. Lardner on the Logos; and some other Sermons and Tracts. Upon this occasion he was introduced to the late Rev. Jeremiah Joyce, the secretary of the Unitarian Society; who behaved very kindly to him, and made him a present of twelve of the Society's tracts. Roberts expressed a wish to converse with Mr. Joyce upon the subject of religion, and called upon him for this purpose in Gloucester-place. But not finding Mr. Joyce at home, and being obliged almost immediately to leave



the country upon his return to India, he was disappointed of the pleasure and improvement which he expected, and would probably have reaped from this interview; and he returned to India without having made any further acquaintance with the Unitarians in this country.

“It is not to be supposed that a man whose mind is so enlightened as that of William Roberts, and who has discovered so ardent a love of truth, and zeal in the pursuit of it, would be indifferent about the communication of it to others. In this respect, however, he appears to have combined discretion with his zeal; and without forcing his opinions upon others, so as to give offence, he embraced every opportunity of communicating instruction to those who were willing to learn. And though by some his doctrine was rejected as strange, and even heathenish, there were others (and those persons of the same or inferior rank in life to himself) who received it with pleasure, and publicly professed the faith of Christ according to the purest principles of Unitarianism.

The first of these was Meguel Annathy, who being originally a heathen, had been converted to the Catholic faith, and who became an Unitarian twenty years ago. His conduct has always been irreproachable: he is now seventy-five years of age, in a bad state of health, and he maintains himself by keeping a Tamul school to teach children to read.

“In the latter end of the year 1813, a small place of worship was opened at a short distance from Madras, and a congregation of Unitarian Christians was formed, consisting of about ten families, besides a number of individuals, most of whom are converts from heathenism, and all of them persons of very inferior stations in life. For the use of this society, Roberts has drawn up a liturgy, upon the plan of Mr. Lindsay’s. When he can himself attend, he conducts the religious worship, administers the sacraments, and reads and explains the Scriptures: and in his absence this duty is performed by Meguel Annathy. At this chapel they also marry and bury the dead. And though some of their neighbours wonder at their singularity, and think them conceited, they are perfectly unmolested in the profession of their religion, and are known by the name of the

Congregation of native Christians at Pursewaukum, that being the name of the district where their place of worship stands. They are supplied with New Testaments from Calcutta by a Bible Society, auxiliary to the British and Foreign Bible Society, an institution which does honour to the age and nation in which it originated, and diffuses its blessings through the whole habitable world. The Rev. Marmaduke Thomson is their agent at Madras, and kindly supplies the wants of the native Christians at Pursewaukum."

---

EXTRACT

*From the Seventh Report of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.*

'YOUR Committee continue to receive gratifying proofs of the utility of this Association in the support and encouragement of Unitarian Christianity abroad. Their correspondence with various friends of their cause in distant parts of the globe continues, and becomes more extended; and they avail themselves of such opportunities as occur of placing their books and tracts in the hands of their friends for distribution.

'In India, William Roberts of Madras, and Abraham Chiniah of Secunderabad, pursue their labours, and their labours bear fruit of a most pleasing and valuable nature.

'In the last Report part of a letter from William Roberts of Madras is given, in which he mentions having received a visit from an inquiring young man named Aarumugam Pilly, an inhabitant of a place called Chillumbrum, 141 miles south of Madras. This young man was desirous of information on the subject of Unitarian Christianity. The Committee have pleasure in laying before you the following portion of a letter just received from William Roberts, dated 5th of January, 1832, containing interesting particulars in relation to that subject:

"A. Chiniah has written to me for a new supply of my tracts, which I have forwarded to him with those printed in this year. In a letter from him of the 6th instant he says that they are all well; their school, divine service, and preaching, continue.

‘ “Aarumugam Pilly, whom I have mentioned in my letters of December and February last, has written to me by regular post in the beginning of last month, requesting to send David Savery Mooto, our Pursewaukum schoolmaster, to stay with him for a while to instruct his young friends in the principles of Unitarian Christianity. I have accordingly sent David Savery Mooto on the 21st of last month; it was rainy weather; he was nine days in going, and five days in coming; stayed there twenty-three days; he came here again on the 27th of this month with Aarumugam Pilly and another young man of the same caste.

‘ My object in sending David Savery Mooto was to ascertain on the spot, whether every thing that Aarumugam Pilly said of himself was correct, whether he has circulated some of my tracts, whether S. could meet with men that were reading them, or with men that received religious instructions from A.—what impression it made on their minds,—and how they are inclined towards pure Christianity. To these S. says, that A. belongs to a large respectable family at Chillumbrum worth some property. He has seen his father (the same person that A. brought and introduced to me in my house here), mother, sister, brother, uncle, his mother’s father, and some other of his relations. Close to A.’s house there is a school, containing about thirty scholars. The schoolmaster is reading my Exposition of Indian Mythology; some of the big boys in the school are learning to repeat verses out of my other tract on Heathenism (two parts of which I had printed in last year). Both these works are approved by the schoolmaster, and several others to whom A. has communicated some knowledge of Unitarianism previous to S.’s going there. Instructions for youth also is in the school. S. often went to the school, and spoke with the master and scholars; and S. has copied on Cadjan verses for the boys out of the aforementioned tract, and hymns out of our prayer-book. All the time that S. was there, men came to him often to hear him read the above tracts and others, and explain the principles of pure religion. As long as he spoke on the unity of God, his attributes, providence, his universal government, his spiritual worship, and the purity and upright conduct that He re-

quires in his worshipers, they listened to him with delight and approbation; but when he began to mention the name of Christ or Christians, they did not like it: they show great aversion to the name of Christ and Christians. The Protestant Missionaries endeavoured once to establish a school there, but could not succeed. The Roman Catholics, by their image worship and incarnate God, and all Trinitarian Christians, by their plurality of beings in Divine nature, and other incompatible doctrines, have not a little offended the eyes and ears of the heathen against Christ and Christianity. Though they themselves are idolaters, and immersed in superstition, yet they do not like the same idolatry and contradictions, though in different form and appellations, among those who are famed for learning, knowledge and virtues, and profess to possess true religion.

“A’s uncle told S. that Chillumbrum is full of idolatry and superstitions. If you intend to sow the seeds of Unitarianism here, you must plough and weed the idolatrous ground with care. You must not irritate your hearers by exposing the base nature of idolatry all at once. You should go about it gently and by degrees; expose one error after another; sow your seed; fence it round, to prevent the wild beasts destroying the seed by their intrusion; keep watering, and watch carefully its growth: then you may expect Unitarianism to take root and spread its shade. S. says that the town is very large, full of Brahmins, Velaters, and people of other castes. The Velaters, like the Brahmins, live upon rice and vegetables, and place very high value upon the distinction of their caste. A. is of the Velaters’ caste of this description. Owing no doubt to A.’s previous instructions to his relations and friends, and his own inclination to truth, S. was well received, and suffered to live and converse with them freely; for otherwise, S. says, that they, through their superstitious notion of their caste, would not suffer him to come among them. A. himself is fully convinced of the absurdity of idolatry and distinction of castes. As Christianity does not compel its professors to eat or drink anything that they have not been customed to, he is determined to profess Christianity, and propagate it among his friends. To this purpose he is now come here, that he may receive

baptism; but S. says, that though A.'s father is not against his son's inclination, yet he would have him to defer that for six months longer, till he got him married. If A. singly receives baptism, and returns to Chillumbrum, it would create persecution against him, and impede the progress of truth. There are now about ten hearers at Chillumbrum. If we can make arrangement with A., for him to return for six or eight months, and continue his instruction to them and others, and prepare as many as he can for baptism; and when they are ready, if A. acquaints us, then either me, if my health permits, or himself, may go and baptize them there: this will draw the attention of others to inquiry. To this his suggestion I have agreed, and engaged A. to give up his whole time for the instruction of himself and his friends. I am to allow him for the present five rupees a month; and told him that I will write all this to my respectable friends; and if he continues in his duty faithfully, and exerts himself to the best of his ability, I have no doubt of Divine blessing attending upon his labours; and my friends that have enlightened, and are interested in its diffusion, will become (whether I am alive or dead,) his friends and supporters. He and his friends are to take their leave on Monday, January 2d, 1832.

“Abraham Chiniah of Secunderabad, writes also satisfactory accounts of his proceedings. Assisted by Theophilus Roberts, a service in his chapel, he says, is maintained every Sunday morning. The Scriptures are read and expounded, and discourses held with strangers that may attend, and with each other, on Christian truth. It is proposed also to meet on Sunday evenings for the purpose of religious conversation. His school is going on well; there are now twenty-five children attending, though six have left it. A Committee of a president and three members, is regularly held on the 10th of each month, to examine and report on the school, to examine the scholars both in reading and writing, &c., as also to examine the books belonging to the Society.

“It was stated at the last meeting, that a Transylvanian student, named Moses Szekelly, then studying at Gottingen, to prepare for a Professorship at the Unitarian College at Clausenberg, had expressed a wish to visit this country, in order to cement an union between the English and Transylvanian Unitarians, but was



prevented doing so by the want of funds. Your Committee, reciprocating this friendly feeling, invited him to this country, and guaranteed his expenses. Accordingly he visited England in September last, and had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the state and character of our churches, and with our religious views ; of seeing the College at York, and the plans of education pursued there ; and of selecting such English works on Unitarianism for the library at Clausenburg, and for his private use, as appeared to him most likely to be useful. His visit was shorter than the Committee hoped it would be ; but we trust that we shall find in Mr. Szekelly a future able correspondent, through whose instrumentality a closer connexion may be formed and maintained, for mutual benefit, between ourselves and our brethren on the Continent.

“ Your Committee refer with satisfaction to the continuance of the Unitarian Society at Paris, under the pastorship of the Rev. Israel Worsley, and the formation of a Unitarian Association in that Capital. To that Association they have voted a donation of £20, for the purpose of aiding in the expense of translating and circulating tracts in the French language, in defence and recommendation of pure Christianity. They trust that under its auspices just and improving views of religious truth may be widely diffused through the French nation, and on the Continent.

“ A regular correspondence is kept up with the liberal Church at Geneva. The passed year has witnessed the production and publication of several valuable and excellent Essays in French, by Monsieur Chenevière, member of the venerable Company of Pastors, and Professor of Theology in the Academy, against the doctrines of Calvinism, the Trinity, and Original Sin. A periodical work has for some time been supported by the liberal Divines of Geneva, under the title of “*Révue Protestante de Genève* : ” another is published by Monsieur Vincent, at Nismes.

“ In both these works religious opinions are advocated which meet with our warmest sympathy ; and we trust they are extending and confirming the knowledge of the “ only true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.” Our Genevese correspondent informs us :—

“The Church of Geneva has not declared itself a Unitarian Church, but a Remonstrant Church, as the Presbyterians of the North of Ireland have done. It admits only the Bible for its confession of faith, and all those who follow this standard, and are willing to regard as brethren those who follow the same rule, whatever their opinions on other points, are regarded as belonging to it.

“This does not hinder the prevalence of Anti-Trinitarian opinions in the Church of Geneva; for of the 29 pastors employed, (15 for the city, 14 for the country,) there are but three, to my knowledge, who are orthodox. The same proportion holds among the ministers not yet placed. To inform you, Sir, of the religious statistics of our Canton, know, that of the 48,000 inhabitants whom it includes, about one third are Catholics; almost the whole of the other two-thirds belong to our national Church. The Separatists amount only to about 500 persons. The mass of the population is quite contrary to their opinions; but they have some rich persons who support them, and amongst others many English entitled Evangelicals.”

The same correspondent informs us that a gentleman who was about to engage himself as minister of the Unitarian Church at Paris, has become a pastor of a Protestant Church at Genoa,—a circumstance which promises to contribute essentially to the growth and establishment of pure Christianity on the continent of Europe. A Committee still exists at Gibraltar, to which some influential members have lately been added, for the circulation of Unitarian writings in English and Spanish. Although two of your Society's correspondents have been expelled, under circumstances of some hardship, from the place, it continues its operations. It has sent some of the good seed, the Spanish translations, to persons of confidence during the last year in Rio Janeiro, in Malta, Algiers, and Leghorn; and expresses no doubt that our excellent doctrine will be extensively spread. The correspondents above mentioned, have taken refuge in France, and your Committee have placed in the hands of a warm friend, now at Marseilles, some books and tracts for use and distribution.”

#### OBITUARY,

Oct. 7, Mary Isabella, wife of Henry Joy, Esq. Belfast.  
Same day, Ann, wife of William Johnson, Esq. Fortfield, near Belfast.

THE  
**Bible Christian.**

No. XI.

DECEMBER, 1832.

VOL. III.

[FOR THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

ISAAC.\*

OF all the patriarchs, Isaac was the meekest and mildest, the most patient, forgiving, and irreproachable. His implicit submission to be sacrificed by his father, without remonstrance or resistance, is unparalleled among the various instances of parental authority and filial obedience recorded in history; it is the more remarkable since they were alone, and Isaac probably advancing to the vigor of manhood, while Abraham was declining into the decrepitude of age. The years of Isaac cannot be exactly ascertained, but we know that he was a stout youth, able to carry a bundle of faggots to the top of a mountain, and, therefore, could at least make his escape and elude the pursuit of his father.†

As the generosity and forbearance of Abraham were evinced in the dispute concerning the property in a well, so the quiet and inoffensive temper of Isaac displayed itself on a similar occasion. Agreeably to the migratory habits of those eastern countries which still continue, Isaac took up his abode in the territories of Abimelech. That good king, who had behaved to Abraham with so much hospitality and kindness, conducted himself in the same manner to Isaac, and testified the same delicate regard to the honour of Rebekah as formerly to that of Sarah; but his subjects, envying the prosperity of Isaac, and being incommoded by so numerous a body of intruders, adopted the same method of annoying him, that is practised at this day, by stopping and filling up the wells which Abraham had digged. And Isaac de-

\* For Abraham, see page 435.

† Isaac was born in the 91st year of his mother, and 101st of his father. Sarah died at the age of 127, when Isaac was 36 years old, and his father 137; and few incidents are recorded between the intended sacrifice and the death of Sarah, by which that interval might be computed. Josephus supposes him to have been 25.

parted thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelled there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water which they had digged in the days of Abraham, his father. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. And the herdmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdmen, saying, the water is ours. And they digged another well, and strove for that also. And they removed from thence and digged another well, and for that they strove not. Thus did Isaac repeatedly surrender his interests and rights to his encroaching neighbours, and not from inability to defend them, for the king of the country had said unto him, "Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we."

The same submissive spirit appeared on the occasion of his marriage. We are not told that he was consulted, or had any knowledge of his father's design, and still less any acquaintance with the woman selected for his wife; neither did he pay his court in person, but was married by proxy. "And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had; thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.\* He is nevertheless distinguished above all the members of his family for conjugal fidelity, being alone contented with one wife. Isaac and Rebekah, are accordingly selected as models of this virtue in the form of celebrating matrimony in the Common Prayer.

Notwithstanding this, the only blemish in Isaac's character, and the greatest injury which he suffered, arose from his connexion with Rebekah; as to the first, it may be pleaded in his excuse, that he was misled by the example of his father; they were both guilty of denying their wives in a strange country, for their own security, and thus exposing them to seduction or violence.

It appears in both these cases, that this people whom Abraham suspected to be destitute of the "fear of God,"

---

\* Haran of the earlier Scriptures, is called Charran in the later, and is celebrated as the scene of the interesting histories of Isaac (Abraham's servant,) and Rebekah's interview at the well, and of Jacob's serving for Leah and Rachel; which are as characteristic of the manners of the Bedouin Arabs of the present as they were of the people of that early age.—*Buckingham's Mesopotamia*, vol. 1. p. 162.

had a greater respect for the sanctity of the matrimonial vow than either of these Patriarchs, and that Abimeleck was influenced by an apprehension of the Divine displeasure.

As to the second, the innocent, unsuspecting Isaac, became, in his old age, the dupe of his wife, so long the sole partner in his affection and confidence. She persuaded her younger son to combine with her in imposing on his aged father, and supplanting his elder brother, his father's favourite, for "Isaac loved Esau, because he eat of his venison." For the success of this gross imposition they depended on the dimness of Isaac's sight, and the obtuseness of his feeling. The deceit he had nearly detected by the acuteness of his hearing, but with characteristic simplicity and credulity, he was persuaded to doubt the testimony of his ears, and accordingly bestowed his blessing and inheritance upon Jacob. Even after he was undeceived, far from retracting his blessing, he refrained from all invectives and reproaches against the deceivers, and contented himself with expressing his regret, and his affection for Esau, and bestowing on him an inferior benediction.

This review of the few incidents afforded by the life of Isaac, will, I think, justify the character given him at the commencement of this paper, and entitle him to the appellation of a man "blameless, and harmless, and without reproach." Philip. ii. 14. Some may be of opinion, that I have placed this eminent Patriarch too low in the scale of merit, in giving him a title now held in little estimation. I shall therefore subjoin some reflections tending to place it in its true light, and a more favourable point of view. The blameless, and harmless man is equally cautious of incurring blame and doing harm—of being an object of reproach and an instrument of mischief. These qualities are very aptly united in the same character; since the surest way to escape censure, is to do ill to none. The harmless man is either blameless, or men are disposed to pardon his inoffensive failings. We should be harmless if we wish to be blameless.

The concise and simple character includes a very extensive field of benevolent duty, which solicits our culture by several considerations.



In the first place, this duty is not of a very arduous or difficult nature. It is in the power of every one, in a great measure, to abstain from injury, and if he does, he may reasonably hope to pass, in the same degree, free from blame. Though the world is notoriously prone to satire and slander, it aims at higher game than the harmless man: we rather hunt the beast of prey than the inoffensive domesticated animal. These points in the Christian character partake of the same nature with the rest, in being practicable by all: and over some of them they possess this advantage, that they are most easily attained by men in humble and retired life, who have few provocations to violence or fraud, and afford few handles to detraction. Their lowly situation offers a bad mark for the shafts of malice. And as they do not live in a crowd, they are rarely exposed to any irritating collision with their neighbours. Smooth and round they roll along their level course, seldom encountering any obstacle; and if they do, surmounting it without difficulty, or evading it without offence.

2. This is the way in which the generality of men can do most good. It is the nature of man to be able to do more harm than good. It is, therefore, of more consequence, that he should avoid doing evil, than aim at much good; except these qualities can be combined in his character. Let him first cease from evil, then learn to do well. One, who studiously avoids committing an injury, though not so solicitous to exercise goodwill, is a more valuable member of Society, than one, who should be intent upon some extensive scheme of benevolence, but indifferent to the safety and ease of those about him. As it is difficult to unite these qualities, the safer way for most men is to adhere to this precept. Many who can not promote much good, may refrain from doing harm; and one who, with all his exertions, would fail in acquiring fame, may reasonably hope to escape reproach.

3. This rule of conduct will conduce more to the happiness of the person himself and all his connexions, than any different range of duty. This will appear probable to any one, who duly estimates the value of freedom from blame and freedom from harm. The comfort of the individual arises more from being always exempt

from censure than being sometimes an object of praise : and security from injury contributes more to the happiness of the community, than almost any positive advantage they can enjoy. Besides, these exemptions from blame and harm, are also more easily obtained than more splendid advantages. A man may make sure of passing through the world with silent approbation, who would labour in vain to extort applause ; for, if he should be so fortunate as to acquire fame from one class of mankind, he would infallibly find it silenced by the obloquy of another ; or the reputation derived from one action or one quality in his character, would seldom counterbalance the disrepute attached to another part of his conduct, even by his former admirers.

4. As far as our worldly happiness depends upon the sympathy or fellow-feeling of our brethren (and surely this is no small source of consolation and satisfaction,) the blameless and harmless man has a decided advantage over his more active and bustling neighbours. He may reasonably expect that men will rejoice with him, when he rejoices ; and weep with him, when he weeps. It would indeed be inhuman, which literally means contrary to human nature, to refuse our congratulations to one who never did harm, and our condolence to him who never deserved blame : and, it would be still more inhuman, to aggravate the sorrow and misery of one who had never hurt our vanity and pride, or obstructed our interest and advancement. Such an unassuming passenger through life may reasonably hope, that every one will clear his way, remove his difficulties, and assist his progress, and whatever contests they may have with each other, he may expect to pass through the crowd without injury or insult, and that every one will wish him well, and bid him God speed !

5. The order of Providence is wonderfully calculated to produce happiness, and, if men would never disturb it, it would infallibly occasion much more pure and general felicity than we now enjoy. The blameless and harmless man suffers it to take its course ; the man of speculative benevolence or benevolent exertion, labours to direct and improve it. This is an ambitious, perhaps in some cases, a presumptuous, aim : and often produces an effect contrary to the design of the benevolent specu-

lator. We may easily see and should be always ready to acknowledge, that God is the author of all good; that all our misfortunes and miseries, which are not unavoidably connected with a mortal body, are occasioned by ourselves; and that many of the vexations and irritations which fritter away the comforts provided for us by Heaven, are the consequences of our injudicious, though sometimes well-meant, attempts to correct the inconveniencies to which we are by nature unavoidably exposed, and enhance the benefits which naturally and spontaneously flow from the fountain of all good.

Notwithstanding all that has been said in favour of these inoffensive dispositions, it may still be alledged that they are but negative qualities, not perfectly attainable in many situations of active life, and sometimes incompatible with the higher classes of virtues; that they rather indicate innocence than merit—the absence of malice than the presence of benevolence. In the busy scenes and complicated interests of social life, they cannot be uniformly acted upon. In promoting the *public* good, one must often offend and injure *private* persons: in serving a friend, one shall sometimes hurt, without intending to injure, a stranger; and on some critical emergencies, or in some arduous offices, pain will unavoidably be given, if not to the innocent, at least to the guilty, by a proper discharge of an important duty. It is often hard to do good to one without hurting another, and sometimes this competition of claims will be so perplexing, as to render the choice very difficult.

From the frequent occurrence of such circumstances as these, and from the general ambition of men to quit their appropriate sphere of action, the character of a blameless and harmless man has been most unjustly undervalued. Men are so ambitious of appearing useful, important and spirited, that the milder and more tranquil qualities of the Christian character are in danger of being despised; and scarcely any one would be flattered by the appellation of an innocent, harmless, inoffensive man, of whom nobody could speak ill. We do not sufficiently consider, whether, when we renounce this amiable title, we are qualified to establish our claim to one more meritorious; whether our abilities and circumstances are adapted to that to which we aspire—whether

the object of our ambition be more worthy, or more beneficial to the world, than that of our unmerited contempt: or, whether an under-part well filled, be not more deserving of praise than a higher one, to which we are unequal. Of those whose ideas of duty compel them to assume a higher tone, I am sure there is no generous mind, that does not languish for an opportunity of fleeing from contention, and relapsing into the temper and manners of the blameless and harmless man. "O that I had wings like a dove," said David, "for then I would fly away and be at rest. I would hide me from the windy storm and tempest." We should also reflect, that though in common cases these virtues may be easily practised, there are others, in which the exercise of them is extremely difficult, and requires very heroic exertions. It may be easy to live among our relations and friends without injury, offence, or blame; but it will require considerable elevation of mind, to conduct ourselves in the same manner in public life, amid competitors, rivals, enemies, back-biters, and slanderers. To a well-disposed mind it cannot be difficult to abstain from detraction, violence, or fraud; but few of us are able, at all times, to suppress indignation, scorn, envy, or even revenge; add to these bigotry, uncharitableness, and evil-speaking, which are the besetting sins of our times. It would be well, if men would study to master the difficulties of this temper, which they think so easily attained, before they aspire to any higher praise. If they did, I will venture to prognosticate, that few men would attempt to rise above it, and those who should, would be better prepared for encountering the temptations and provocations of more public life. To be uniformly kind, affectionate, and forgiving; to wish well, and do good to our enemies; to suppress emotions of contempt, pride, censoriousness, toward those who differ from us, requires a degree of mental exertion, that may satisfy the most active and ambitious soul; of resolution, that the most philosophic genius may not at all times be able to command; and of generosity, of which the noblest and most exalted spirit may justly be proud.

From these various views of the subject, we may conclude, that though this precept may be complied with, by men of very inferior endowments, and mean

acquirements, yet others of much superior qualities will often find it extremely difficult to carry it into execution:—that though in themselves, without any more splendid accompaniments, the merit of escaping censure and shunning mischief, does not constitute a very exalted character, yet it may add lustre to the most brilliant parts and dignified virtue. In proportion to the temptations and provocations, to which we are subject, are the merit and beauty of adhering to our duty without incurring blame or inflicting injury. Thus, a man of little penetration or sensibility deserves no credit for passing over, without notice, an insult which he neither felt nor even perceived. One of little delicacy or refinement will seldom *take* offence at violations of decency and good manners, or *give* it, by betraying his disgust; and a dull person is in no danger of kindling the resentment or violating the feelings of his companions by the brilliant scintillations or poisoned arrows of wit. But a man of penetrating sagacity and delicate feeling, deserves the greater credit, on these accounts, for overlooking an insult; and his refinement will not be the less esteemed for the mildness with which he can pass over the grossness of an innocent, well-meaning friend. The excellence of wit consists in being a lambent, rather than a consuming flame—in resembling the playful corruscations of the Northern Lights, and not the forked flashes of the Lightning.

Though these qualities, however, cannot be always exercised, and are not always very meritorious, they are, in all cases, and in every situation, very desirable, useful, and pleasant, and are in perfect harmony with the distinguishing feature of the Christian character; and should, therefore, be made the general rule of our conduct. They should be kept in mind, as principles to which we should study to approach as near as possible. By them we should steer our course as by the Polar Star, though often driven aside by contrary winds and deceitful currents. We should not be too ready to apologize for our aberrations by pleading the exuberance of more spirited though virtuous motives, or the violence of more rude and boisterous passions.

Let us endeavour to dilute the more ardent and sanguine ingredients in our temper, by a liberal infusion of



innocent and inoffensive qualities. If our vanity or a fallacious philosophy should seduce us to take pride in the indulgence of different sentiments, let us correct our errors by adverting to that perfect exemplar of every virtue, whose peculiar bias it was to be holy, harmless, and undefiled: who commanded us to be harmless as doves, though we be as wise as serpents, and who would not himself break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax; who, though reviled, reviled not again; though in continual intercourse with the world, was separate from sinners; and though endowed with the noblest powers, principles, and affections of soul, was distinguished for being meek and lowly in heart.

By the same authority and example we are both admonished and encouraged to unite these qualities, to combine the amiable with the respectable, the firm with the mild. The more a man values himself upon austerity and dignity, the more should he wish to grace his character with an intermixture of blameless and harmless dispositions. The prevalence of the former will render the latter more amiable, and more requisite to the perfection of his virtue; and men will admire in him, what they might overlook, or even despise, in persons of a softer mould. What in them would be weakness, will, in him, be considered as condescension.

Nor does Scripture, in its most positive and explicit instructions differ from what we learn from the example of Christ. It never requires a mean, insipid compliance with folly or vice, in order to obtain the good opinion of the world. There is not any part of the character of a Christian, marked with such nice and delicate discrimination as this. We are to be wise as serpents as well as harmless as doves. We are to be blameless and harmless; but, at the same time, to shine as lights in the world, holding out the word of life. We are not to be conformed to the world, but transformed by the renewing of our mind, so as to do the perfect will of God: yet we are to live peaceably with all men. Though we are to act with such prudence, that our good qualities be not evil spoken of, and follow after things which make for peace, we are also to couple with them things, by which we may edify one another; and to please every one his neighbour, provided it be for his good to

edification : and, in general the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please themselves, nor put a stumbling-block in a brother's way. We are said to be blessed when all men revile us; but it is only when they speak ill of us *falsely*, and that for our attachment to the faith of Christ—in this case we should compassionate their ignorance, and possess our own souls in peace.

How much good does that man do, who does no harm ; who neither blames nor is blamed—neither reproaches nor gives room for reproach ! Who looks upon the errors and foibles of his fellow-creatures, with sympathy and pity, and laments over their calamities and crimes with godly sorrow ! How happy they, whose tranquil minds and calm enjoyments are never ruffled by the storms and tumults of a restless world ; who, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, can seclude themselves both from harm and blame,

“ On evil times though fallen, and evil tongues.”

---

#### AN ACCOUNT OF A LATE REVIVAL IN CORK.

( *In a familiar letter to the Editors of the Bible Christian.* )

DEAR SIRS,—As I think it would be of interest to your readers, I will give you some account of a revival meeting I attended a few nights ago, in this city. But first I will describe the actors. The High Priest on the occasion, was a Mr. T—, of Clonakilty, a gentleman of small property, and nothing to do ; a Mr. P—, an attorney, and young Mr. H—, son to an apothecary of this city. Mr. T's arrival was announced, and notice of a “Christian Revival” to be held, was posted on the Wesleyan Methodist House, where a Tract meeting was assembled. This Mr. T. aspires to be an Epic Poet. He did “write a book” which his detractors call trash, but he calls it blank verse, and he printed it too. But a wicked wag of this city, one of *Blackwood's* crew, played an expensive trick on our poor Poet. Some days before the Poem could be published, Dr. M. got a number of his scholars and others, to go to the publisher's and ask for the Poem ; notes were also written, and the work was, apparently, in great demand. This

flattered the Poet so much, that an additional thousand copies were struck off; but alas! when they were for sale, no one came to buy; he got rid of a few only, among his own friends.

The Revival was held in the central school-room. When we entered a long, dimly-lighted room, Mr. T. was standing behind a table at one end, and forms were placed at either side with a passage down the centre. There was a pause of some minutes, at length young H. came, and the business proceeded. The room was fast filling during this time; the great majority were females. The entire numbers were about 200. We had prayer then by young H. and for some time no one could object to what he said, but before long, he began about the redeeming blood of Christ, saying, "that but for the shedding of that blood, we should now—even now, be in the nethermost hell, crying out in anguish for one drop of water to cool our parched tongues." During the whole prayer, great numbers were coming in, but it created a good deal of noise, and some little boys attracted by the numbers, ran up the stairs and several times made an unseasonable disturbance. This, often repeated, enraged H. who had just come to the passage quoted, when an outrageous racket by the boys on the very head of the stairs, raised his ire so, that he prayed that satan would not be permitted to disturb our devotions any more. But P., the attorney, acted more vigorously, he rose from his knees and quelled the devil, by driving the little boys away. After prayers we had another hymn, and then the sermon from Mr. T.

I do not now remember the text, which is to be regretted, but, however, it was not of much consequence, as he forgot it also from the time he gave it forth, but ran on in a most extraordinary and rough-shod manner through the whole Bible, bringing texts from Isaiah and matching them in Revelations, from Daniel and Romans, from Psalms and the Gospels. If one word in any of these was similar or suited to another, he brought both together and made a plausible hit sometimes. But for a poet, he was utterly regardless of the unities. The sermon was perfect patch-work; sense gave way to sound, for a vast number of texts were strung together, without any relation one to another.

The sermon, being finished, we had another prayer, of still more exciting tendency, calling on Christ to come and influence his expectant disciples. This closed the general business of the evening, and several went away, but the majority remained, invited thereunto by the preacher, who asked any that were interested in such Christian revivals to stay, as he should not keep them very long. From seventy to eighty persons remained.

After a pause, Mr. T. requested that all in the room should move to his left hand side. Thus the forms on one side were crowded, and the others unoccupied. The attorney now prayed, and with such contortions of countenance and eyes, such flinging of the arms aloft, and striking of the breast and table, that it was really terrific to gaze on him. This was very lengthy, and sufficient to rouse and excite the feelings to a high degree, particularly of the females, who, I have said, were the great majority. Mr. T. then addressed those who were converted, in a strain little removed from blasphemy, as persons absolved from the guilt and pollution of the world, and exhorting them to come out and display the work of Christ in their hearts.

I was in hopes, for a second, that the better sense of the people with whom I sat, would have renounced such anti-christian sentiments, and give the practical denial to his low mistaken views of the gospel. But I was mistaken; one lady led the way, and in a short time about fifty ladies and only *one* gentleman, and he a very young one, went over like a flock of sheep, and sat on the opposite benches. Mr. T. again exhorted them as persons removed from sin; and then turned to the few that remained on the old seats on which we were seated, and spoke to those who now wished to make a profession of their love of Christ. He intimated that none that remained there could love Christ. Some few did go over, and among these, some, who, in every day life, are esteemed not very praiseworthy.

Mr. T. now spoke to the "sheep on his right hand" and displayed in glowing colors the enjoyments of a regenerated heart; and again the attorney gave a prayer, which, if possible, was still more violent than the preceding, summing it up with an invocation to the Trini-

ty, and in words such as these, "and though, O God! we cannot understand the deep mystery of the Triune Godhead, yet will we worship thee," &c. &c. During this prayer, the groanings and sighing were very audible, increasing very much as it approached the end.

After this, Mr. T. having had a consultation with his assistants, desired the new converts to stay. We were at this time about to depart, and had moved towards the door, when the attorney came down the room towards us, and as he well knew our sentiments, he was much astonished, and exclaimed, "Bless my soul and body! what brings you here?" This was said in his usual tone, and seemed the only natural expression he had used for the night. After our being discovered, a change was wrought in the subsequent part of the proceedings. As we wished to hear the accounts of regeneration given by the new converts, we had remained, but it was now only asked to receive the names. Three names of females were given. We then left them.

Thus are these proceedings carried on by people, who on other points are considered clear-headed enough. I do not wish to set down "aught in malice," but I really could not give a cool, plain statement of a transaction that was in every respect any thing but reverential. But in sober sadness, to see a number of persons persuading themselves that a change can be effected in their mind in one hour, which it would require years to accomplish, is enough to sadden the most thoughtless. Alas for their religion!—Yours, dear sir,

AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.

*Cork, 20th October, 1832.*

---

*Cork, October 24th, 1832.*

THE REV. W. B. KIRKPATRICK, IN CORK.

THE city of Cork had been favoured about November last with a visit from the Rev. Mr. Kirkpatrick, one of the ministers of the Orthodox Presbyterian Congregation, in Mary's Abbey, Dublin. Mr. K. was then generally understood to have come down for the purpose of gathering into one fold certain "stray sheep of the house of John Knox—Scotchmen, who because



they had not the high-church without steeples nearer them, deviated into the high-church which had, and into the independent conventicle, or relieved the want of a Scotch Sabbath day, by walking, boating, or even posting a leger in a counting-house. Mr. K. it is alleged, declared that he would not meddle with the Presbyterian body already founded here, and his first cry was all "*peace, peace:*" the folly of such a declaration from any man sincere in his Orthodoxy, and whose mission was to found an Orthodox Presbyterian body, was soon made obvious by Mr. K. himself, who made domiciliary visits to several Unitarian families, "having heard that his attentions were desired by them." His success in drawing souls out of the Cork Presbyterian church, and out of the way of Unitarianism, has not been specifically declared, though assertions have dealt in round numbers, and if those "perverts" do disappear from us, we must only exert ourselves to inform ourselves more and more, if the war of opinion threatens our integrity as a body. Having had some facilities for observing the operations of this missionary, it may be well to inform Unitarians how he conducted his mission, that they may know such men, should they appear amongst them.

Mr. Kirkpatrick's manner is extremely meek, and his conversational voice is low, which, aided by his small stature and unobtrusive appearance, do in a manner prepare the way for the gentle "spiriting" of a lamb-like missionary. He even glides into a room stealthily and quietly, as if he feared to startle by a resolute tread, the "sick souls" upon whom he is about to expend his balm and honey. To this mannerism add a disclamation of any doctrinal anxieties, and some technicalities, very like cant, about the love of our Saviour, with a general profession of quietism as to sectarian distinctions, and you have the outer and first verbal rudiments of the missionary. When, however, every *denunciation* of orthodoxy is discovered under this apparent gentleness, it is marvellous with how much *sang froid* the perditions of man can be denounced—but that is of the system. Mr. Kirkpatrick, as far as I know or believe, puts forward in this quiet manner the most extreme and unjust vituperation of

Unitarians generally; and the principal object of this letter is, through one medium of general communication, to let that portion of the Christian church know how it is characterized to the public, by a minister of the gospel, who boasts that he knows Unitarians well, and was himself one, but came out from amongst them. If, indeed, the imputations be true, Unitarians have much to be thankful for in seeing their malefactions, and they are called on, if they value a world to come, or even seek estimation in this, to wipe off the stain on their Christian profession, by amended conduct. If the charges be false, certainly the organ of Unitarianism in Ireland should modestly assert its true character; and not allow its good to be evil spoken against. Mr. Kirkpatrick's charges require more particular attention, because he is given to charging those who differ from him with "want of charity," which should argue great charity in himself—and directly and practically intimates, that if a person so sensitive to what is Christian candour, can so impugn us, we must be black indeed. To come to facts acquired in a very limited acquaintance with Mr. K., I have to state, that in three different companies, where I met him, he declared that "*he never met a pious Unitarian:—he never met but two Unitarians who knew any thing of Scripture.*" On this matter I cannot forbear saying that Mr. K.'s own Biblical acquisition and facility, did not in a clergyman satisfy my notions, nor at all put him beyond the warning of the adage, "that those should not throw stones, who wear glass doublets"—but to the subject. The next charge against Unitarians was, "*That they never were, nor are not now anxious for the spread of the truth, not even of that which they believe to be the truth. That they never go into the high-ways or lanes to preach the Gospel.*" The next charge to these seems to exculpate from the previous one but one, it is:—"That Unitarians seek to make Unitarians in opinion, for the sake of extending certain views and speculations, but without any anxiety as to the resulting conduct of the converts." The next charge was, "*That the general character and conduct of Unitarians did not indicate a knowledge of God's word, or a feeling of it;*" and the last charge I shall recite was, "*That when Unitarians*

*did do good, it was not with religious views, or with a view to please God."*

These are the succinct charges made against Unitarians, I say succinct, because several indefinite imputations were put, by questioning the opposite virtues, and also much depreciation was attempted by implication, and insinuation. These are serious charges, and ought to be inquired into, having been affirmed by Mr. K. last November here, in Cork, and reiterated more than once, and in an unmitigated form, during his visit at this time, which terminated this day.

Mr. Kirkpatrick claims to possess an intimate knowledge of the Ulster Unitarians, and his stories have got good credence accordingly. This facility of begetting belief may be referable to speciousness and persistency in communicating his bigoted and untrue prejudices, or it may result from his happy and uncompromising mode of detailing facts with which he is well acquainted; to try and enquire which of these is the true case of "Kirkpatrick versus the Unitarians," is an inquest important to all who believe the efficacy of the standard of doctrine given in holy writ,—by its fruit you shall know it. The Reverend Accuser made his charges roundly and repeatedly, against all Unitarians, but it appeared on investigation that he was ignorant of the lives of those men, at least in Cork. He then shifted his ground of allegation to the North, and from his flippancy in making charges in ignorance in the South, I have reasonable grounds to hope that his testimony against the worshippers of one God in Ulster, will be proved equally unfounded. Mr. K. objects to controversy, that is, he would desire that Unitarians should not disturb his course of criminations against them, or deny the force of what they consider misapplications of holy writ, when he wrests it to the support of his own undefined and *half-made-up* Orthodoxy. He found out that Unitarians in Cork do not dislike religious conversation, nor do they fear controversy, when it becomes necessary to show the ground of the truth that is in them, although good manners to a stranger required that he should be the cause of that tone of religious occupation. The unpleasant duty of self-defence more than once put the character of the Cork Unitarians on trial; their discharge of the

duties of the social state in all its branches, was unavoidably appealed to; their exertions in every institution which ameliorated society, and which either mediately or immediately prepared the way for the knowledge of and obedience to God. This Mr. K. met by questioning the motives which impelled to the founding or supporting of Libraries or Mechanics' Institutes, of Temperance Societies, and Anti-Slavery Societies, or Public Charities, as well as the more exclusive religious exertions of that people. Unless Mr. K. in fact, can look into the mind as well as at the act, he withholds his favourable construction from all the exculpating demonstrations of Unitarians. Mr. Kirkpatrick is also displeased with Unitarians because they are not properly intolerant of Popery in the Roman Catholic Church, *and there only*: we denounce Popery every where, and do not attempt to justify it, or make light of it, any where. But with this insinuating Missionary, popish despotism in religious matters, is nothing in the Churches of England or Scotland. Ignorantly swearing to the truth of the book of Common Prayer, with all its contents, and then not knowing what they are, does not startle Mr. K. in an Episcopalian Ministry of the English Popery. He absolves them on the score of their *absolution*, and as for the Athanasian and Nicene creeds, whether they bow the mind to them when they bow the head in Church or not, Mr. K. hardly thinks worth a thought. He says "the matter of the Trinity and not the manner," is all they are pledged to; to read the first creed itself would surely settle this opinion. This pliability in a Presbyterian Minister is amazing, and very unlike what Unitarians here deem the necessary integrity of a Non-conformist Minister; however as a key to this state of opinion, Mr. K's notions of expediency may operate on him, most of his supporters are of that sectary party who are "of the Church of England, but not in her inner courts"—who hold an indeterminate station between the conventicle and the steeple—between Laud and Knox. These Churchmen, whose Orthodoxy is, like Mr. Kirkpatrick's, versatile and infirm, give great latitude in Church government, permitting the Geneva Cap to hold a subjected propinquity with the surplice and stole, and from them Mr. K. takes his liberal and unen-

quiring Church of Englandism, and indeed they approve of that tolerant Presbyterianism which keeps up a visiting acquaintance with episcopacy, and requires of them only the sacrifice of the small morsel of popery with which they are ready to part. Mr. K. palliates the hypocrisy of their holding nominally the Canons, Litanies, Articles, and Creeds, which they either do not investigate, or as Mr. Kirkpatrick says, they disbelieve. Surely such notions of integrity in religion, or in any thing, will not be approved of by any sincere Episcopalian, or discerning and conscientious Nonconformist. Mr. K's distaste to Roman Catholics, as an avowed Conservative in politics, is not inconsistent; but his endurance of popery in any other shape violates sadly such eminent protestantism. But conservatism is aristocratic, and the Roman Catholics here are not the schismatic aristocrats of the established church; besides Mr. K. thinks that a democratic or popular religion, would be atheism. I have not here set down railing for railing, for whatever Unitarians may deem of this account given of Mr. K. he himself thinks highly of the mode of operation detailed; but I think there is one infirmity in his principle of action, which is that of arguing from sensibilities, and reasoning from feelings: for instance, Mr. K. in common with his brother conservatives, was hostile to the new national system of education, of which his co-pastor, Mr. Carlisle, is a principal and valuable forwarder. But Mr. K. it seems is so annoyed with the violence of the "*anti*" party here, that he is *nearly* converted to the government project. Again, he says, so many are against the Church of England, that he feels called on to defend her in her distress. Now with such vivid and overwhelming humanities, Unitarians have surely a claim on Mr. K's tender consideration, for they are a sect at present every where spoken against, by Orthodox Protestants.

In conclusion, it may be naturally supposed that Unitarians are not in the hands of one only inflictor of this vituperative purgation—but our course is clear, not to employ our time and talents, in invidious and depreciating undervaluing of the apparent worth of our Orthodox neighbours, but by striving daily to justify our creed in our conduct, silence the slanderer, the



insinuator, and impugner, by inviting those who are abroad to investigate the doctrine which shall lead us into practical Christianity. If a friend be abused, will a just man by silence acquiesce? My friends have been charged with great faults, and if I was silent I should be a liar against them. Then are these things true? Certainly these charges were made in conversation, but before several, and were reiterated. The above vilifications, for true or false they are such, are not private property—they concern public religion; but as I communicate them for either reformation or denial, to the arraigned Unitarians of the north, I am bound to testify by name that the charges were made as given, and that to them nothing has been added, though depreciating queries, and insinuations hard to convey in writing, are necessarily omitted.—I am, sir, respectfully,  
 RICHARD DOWDEN. (R.)

---

WE have read the communication of our respected Cork correspondent with mingled feelings of pity and surprise:—with pity for Mr. Kirkpatrick's degraded state of mind, and with surprise, not at the wily manner with which he prosecuted his missionary tour, but at his rashness. It is natural enough that he should support his newly-acquired tenets with all the energy in his power, but it is not very wise that he should misrepresent the opinions, actions, and motives of the Northern Unitarians, or those of any other province or church.

That Mr. K. is heartily inclined to censure the *Unitarians generally*, we readily admit; but, we console ourselves with the idea, that while his spirit is willing, his flesh is weak. We positively deny, that either his knowledge or experience of them as a body, enables him to form any just estimate of their acquirements and habits. His early acquaintance with skeptics, some of whom are still living, and all of whom can slide into any opinions which worldly interest may recommend, may have induced, or even seduced him, to confound them with Unitarians. Besides, he is aware, that skeptics, both great and small, do much dislike Unitarians for their unanswerable vindications of Christianity. They have, in all periods and places, since circumstances

allowed, been exposed to the cross fire of Unbelievers and Calvinists:—of Unbelievers, because the arguments which will wound Calvinism cannot touch Unitarianism,—of Calvinists, because they feel themselves called on to save Christianity from the objections to which the peculiarities of the Calvinistic system expose it.

What Mr. K.'s definition of *piety* may be, we cannot venture to surmise; but if it mean the particular discharge of the duties which we owe to God, or the more general observance of reverence for Deity, trust in his providence, love to mankind, and exertion to promote holiness and happiness in society, we fearlessly assert, that Unitarians cannot, in duty to themselves, yield to any other Christian denomination, in the practice of these great virtues. Nor should they: for while they lament their many imperfections, and deny the possibility of meriting any thing from God, they advocate the necessity, not of *faith alone*, but also of piety, charity, and benevolence, for the participation of future felicity. They rejoice to believe that the dictates of conscience, and the influence of the precepts of the Gospel, prevent even Mr. K. and his associates from reducing that part of their faith to practice, which teaches them to believe, that "no mere man, since the fall, is able in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth *daily break* them in *thought, word, and deed*." Mr. K. in harmony with his faith, has borne false witness against his Northern brethren, but we hope in charity, that this is the "head and front of his offending," and we think his thought, word, and deed, in this particular, quite sufficient to prove, if not the corruption of his nature, at least the corruption of his creed. Modesty forbids us to put on record the names of many of the Northern Unitarians, both ministers and laymen, who would put to shame ten times the number of Mr. K.'s Trinitarian brethren, by the piety, sobriety, and regularity of their lives. We dislike comparisons, and would rather provoke all our fellow-christians to love and good works, but when our good is evil spoken of, we are cheered in the recollection, that one has sometimes chased a thousand, and ten put ten thousand to flight. When we speak of ministers, Mr. K., young as he is, cannot but remember what a number of divines of his own tenets,

have, within these twenty years, been either *degraded*, or *suspended*, for various immoralities. And we will venture to assert, that neither the Unitarians of England, nor of Ulster, nor of any other country, would have borne with half the irregularities in their ministers, which several Calvinistic churches have submitted to in theirs. But charity begins at *home* with Mr. K., and sound faith in his friends, is superior to good works in those he calls foes.

If Mr. K. has said, and we cannot dispute the testimony of our highly respectable authority, that *he never met a pious Unitarian*, one of two things must be the case; that he is either not acquainted with Unitarians, or he has stated what is not true. We are aware that he never mixed much with the Unitarians of the North,—the loaves and fishes in their gift, being few and far between,—but we do know that he is deeply indebted to some of them for many kind services, whose superior learning, unostentatious piety, and exemplary life, no man of common candour would call in question. But perhaps the young Minister of Mary's Abbey, is a discernor of spirits; if so, we must submit to his judgment. *We know men only by their fruits.* In his assertion, that *he never met but two Unitarians who knew any thing of Scripture*, there is a happy exception. Who these two favoured individuals may be, we cannot even suppose; but if he will name them, we pledge ourselves to name two hundred fully their equals. We cannot, indeed, promise that our catalogue will contain many such Unitarian worthies, as Davides, Servetus, Emlyn, Whiston, Lindsay, Priestley, Newton, Locke, Lardner, Milton, Clarke, or Abernethy; but we do engage that our list shall be filled with living men, the least of whom will be as great as the assistant minister of Mary's Abbey himself. If he mean by his assertion to exclude, not merely ministers, but plain people, such as the mechanics and shopkeepers of his own respectable charge, we can swell our list to ten thousand. It is acquaintance with the sacred scriptures that makes Unitarians; not by *inference* or *far-fetched conjectures*, but by *plain, positive, and repeated statements*, of which Mr. K. and his church are so well aware, that they dare not trust to the Bible as a perfect rule of faith and practice, but have recourse to

human creeds, tests, and overtures, and every *change* which the varying tide of popular opinion will support.

*That Unitarians never were, nor are not now anxious for the spread of the truth, not even of that which they believe to be the truth ;—that they never go into the highways or lanes to preach the Gospel,* is contradicted by their history and sufferings, both in ancient and modern times. What church has suffered so much persecution, or what people have made so many sacrifices and exertions for the retaining and dissemination of their principles? Mr. K. should know that the law which inflicted severe punishment on the profession of Unitarianism in the United Kingdom, is repealed but *nineteen years*, and that even now there are more than *four hundred* Unitarian Congregations in the British Isles!! If he inquire at the Presbyterian Ministers of Ballymoney and Carrickfergus, who are of the same Synod, and consequently of the same heart and mind with himself, they will tell him of his mistake, and lament that the Northern Unitarians are *over-anxious* and *too often* in the *lanes*, for the spread of what they believe to be the truth. Let him look to America and other countries.

Mr. K's attack upon *the general character and conduct of Unitarians*, was unwise, and surely beyond the instructions of his masters. Though "we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves, nor boast of things without our measure," yet, in the spirit of humility, we invite him to compare his Trinitarian brethren, both lay and clerical, with the calumniated Unitarians of Ulster. We yield to him in numbers, and so must he to the Church of Rome. Does he take our twenty or thirty Unitarian ministers, young and old, as they are? Be it so; and we shall rejoice for the honour of our common country, if he can even select from his hundreds, an equal number of more learned, pious, and exemplary pastors. We have a much more *intimate knowledge* both of the Ulster Unitarians and Trinitarians, than Mr. K., and while we would not overvalue the one, nor undervalue the other, we may, at some future period, remind him of some *facts* that have occurred during the present century, which he cannot deny more than his own existence.

What a happy admission by him, that *Unitarians have done good!* but how unfortunate for them, that he has spoiled the compliment by calling in question their motives!! When they do good, it is *not with a view to please God*. What fools we Unitarians must be! We incur the displeasure of the great;—we bring upon ourselves popular odium;—we forfeit riches and honours, and we have lost the approbation of the Rev. W. B. Kirkpatrick by a firm adherence to our principles, and yet we do not act with a view to please God! We call upon Mr. K., who assumes to be a master heart-prober, to explain what are the motives which prompt Unitarians to pursue such an extraordinary line of conduct. Can he justify the proceedings of the primitive Christians, and condemn the conduct of the present Unitarians? Let him be consistent, and he must admit the similarity of their trials, sacrifices, and situations.

We have recently heard, that a Northern Calvinist, not far from the Bann river, has given it as his opinion, that Unitarians cannot be saved, and that those of the *true faith* who allow that they can, will thereby endanger their own salvation. This is faith, hope, and charity, in a new version, and may be the means necessary to accomplish an end. The differences between the two denominations are great, we readily grant, and require more points than *five* to regulate them. But why Mr. K's wrath has been kindled against the Unitarians, *because they are not properly intolerant of Popery*, is not so easily accounted for. Unitarians take for their creed *the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible*; and they can give again and again, in the plain words of Christ or his Apostles, all the articles of their faith; but they do indeed reject Mr. K's human creeds and confessions. This stirs up his ire against them; but why he should labour to rouse in them an intolerant feeling towards the Roman Catholic Church, we cannot discover. Mr. K. and the Roman Catholics hold a common faith on all *fundamental points*, and both found it on the same common authority:—human creeds, catechisms, and confessions. Both profess to believe in the doctrine of *three persons in the Godhead*;—*in the supreme deity of Christ*;—*in God the Holy Ghost*;—*in Original Sin*, and in *infinite satisfaction given by Christ to divine jus-*



*tice*: and Calvinists tell us that these are the fundamental points of religion. These are undoubtedly the leading principles of the Roman Catholic and Calvinistic churches, and Mr. K. should know, that he has borrowed the very language in which these tenets are expressed, with all its *variations*, from the Church of Rome, and that it is no where in the Bible.

Unitarians and Roman Catholics are more widely different in their religious opinions, than any two Christian Churches that can be named, but the opinions of the former prohibit them from being intolerant to any church; and while they are anxious for the spread of their principles, from a persuasion that their doctrines are better calculated than any other to make men virtuous in time, and thereby to give them a higher capacity for the enjoyment of happiness in eternity, they cannot join in a crusade against any of their fellow-creatures.

Judging of the future by the past, we venture to foretel, that Mr. K. will soon be converted to the new National System of Education, and we augur that he will ascribe his concurrence to a *change* in the system, endeavouring to forget that the change has taken place in himself.

Since the writing of the above, we have read a short letter in the *Southern Reporter*, of the 10th ultimo, of which the following is a copy, and which is somewhat connected with Mr. Dowden's communication.

EDITORS,

(*To the Editor of the Southern Reporter.*)

SIR,—An advertisement having appeared in the *Southern Reporter* of Thursday, Nov. 8th, headed "SCOTS' CHURCH, CORK," demands some little explanation, if not animadversion. The public ought not to be deceived by misconception or misrepresentation.

To establish a Scots' Church who has authority? For such a purpose a Deputation from the Annual General Assembly, as held under the Presidency of a Royal Commissioner, or Deputies from a Presbytery of the Church of Scotland, must *absolutely* be necessary. The General Synod of Ulster might, undoubtedly, empower a certain number of its Members to establish a Presby-

terian Church in Cork, in addition, or in opposition, to that which has subsisted many years under the care of the Synod of Munster. Yet that this should be at all requisite, does not appear. For if there be Presbyterians in this city whose orthodox principles impel them to regret the want of a Church where what they esteem to be the *genuine* doctrines of the Gospel are preached, they may gratify their wish, and satisfy their conscience, by attending the services of the Dissenting Chapel, George's-street, where they will hear ably advocated the principles they maintain, and enjoy the pure Presbyterian *forms* of worship; while, by sending Delegates to the Annual Meeting of the Ulster Synod, they may place themselves under the *government* of the Presbyterian Church.

Surely, then, there can be little *need* of an importation of Orthodoxy into Cork from Dublin. Such a *need* would be a libel upon the zealous and conscientious Evangelical Preachers in this City.

I am, Sir, &c.

CANDIDUS.

Cork, November 10, 1832.

#### ANECDOTES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE ASSEMBLY'S SHORTER CATECHISM.

WITHOUT dwelling at present upon the unscriptural and contradictory dogmas of the Shorter Catechism, allow me to direct the attention of your readers, to the illustrations given of the answer to the sixth question. The answer itself, like many others, is altogether unscriptural, and the illustrations of it, as moulded and applied by the author of the Anecdotes, who calls himself John Whitecross, are confused, vulgar, and unsatisfactory. His book has been much lauded by some divines of reputed Orthodoxy, both in Scotland and Ireland. Dr. Cooke says that "he has read it with great pleasure," and that "the author has fully succeeded in conveying religious instruction in the most attractive form." I have many times lamented that the ten commandments, torn from their connexion in the Holy Bible, are circulated in company with the Shorter Catechism; a part of which is employed to teach the rising generation to believe, that *no mere man since the*

*fall can keep them.* The instructions of the Lord Jesus Christ are of a very opposite kind:—"Whosoever," says he, "shall break one of these least commandments, *and shall teach men so*, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven."

To any believer in divine revelation, unless a creed making advocate, it would appear bold and dangerous to be making illustrations and likenesses respecting the *nature* of the Deity. "To whom will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" says the prophet Isaiah. Even God himself asks, by the same prophet, "To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal?" But Mr. Whitecross, in defiance of all divine warning, and in violation of all the laws of sound philosophy, has published his *Illustrative Anecdotes*, and has obtained recommendations of them.

"Q. 6. How many persons are there in the Godhead?"

"A. There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory."—How is this illustrated?

"1. 'Sitting lately,' says one, 'in a public room at Brighton, where an infidel was haranguing the company upon the absurdities of the Christian religion, I could not but be pleased to see how easily his reasoning pride was put to shame. He quoted those passages, 'I and the Father are one; I in them, and thou in me;' and that there are three persons in one God. Finding his auditors not disposed to applaud his blasphemy, he turned to one gentleman and said with an oath, 'Do you believe such nonsense?' The gentleman replied, 'Tell me how that candle burns?' 'Why,' answered he, 'the tallow, the cotton, and the atmospheric air produce the light.' 'Then they make one light, do they not?' 'Yes.' 'Will you tell me *how* they are one in 'the other, and yet but one light?' 'No, I cannot. But you believe it?' He could not say he did not.' The company instantly made the application, by smiling at his folly; upon which the conversation was changed. This may remind the young and unexperienced, that if they believe only what they can explain, they may as well part with their senses, being surrounded by the wonderful works of God, whose ways are past finding out."

“When Mr. Job Orton, a dissenting minister at Shrewsbury, was preaching from Isaiah ix. 6, his more orthodox hearers, who had doubts concerning his belief of the divinity of Christ, were all attention, in hopes of hearing their pastor’s real sentiments. They were, however, disappointed; for when he came to the words, ‘The mighty God,’ all he said was, ‘The meaning of this I cannot tell, and how should I, when his name is called Wonderful?’”

“Two gentlemen were once disputing on the divinity of Christ. One of them who argued against it, said, ‘If it were true, it certainly would have been expressed in more clear and unequivocal terms.’ ‘Well,’ said the other, ‘admitting that you believed it, were you authorized to teach it, and allowed to use your own language, how would you express the doctrine to make it indubitable?’ ‘I would say,’ replied he, ‘that Jesus Christ is *the true God*.’ ‘You are very happy,’ rejoined the other, in the choice of your words; for you have happened to hit upon the very words of inspiration. St. John, speaking of the Son, says, ‘This is the true God and eternal life.’”

The passages in the first illustration of Mr. Whitecross, which the infidel is represented as quoting, do not bear upon the subject. The first quotation, “I and the Father are one,” introduces but two persons, and they are not said to be *one God*, but simply *one*, and the Greek scholar is aware that the original term rendered one is in the *neuter* gender, and he cannot allow of the term God being either expressed or understood in connexion with it. The very same original term is used in several passages, and even in the very same verse, a part of which is quoted as the second passage:—“I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in *one*.” So that God and Christ are *one* (*ἐν*,) in the very same sense in which Christ prays that his disciples may be *one*, (*ἐν*,) which cannot be understood of *person* or *substance*, and must be understood of *will* or *design*. The third passage is a bare-faced fabrication, of which the infidel should have been told, that he might not object to divine revelation, for maintaining a doctrine that it no where names. This would have been a more honest way of convincing the unbeliever, than by introducing the

vulgar and incorrect illustration, by the *tallow*, the *cotton*, and the *atmospheric air*. Is the tallow, the cotton, and the atmospheric air, the *same in substance*, or are they *equal* in any sense? Is the tallow a candle, is the cotton a candle, and the atmospheric air a candle, and yet not three candles but one candle? This the author of the self-invented anecdotes dare not say, and if so, how does his illustration bear upon the subject? For the Trinitarian cannot venture to say that each person in his Trinity is *less* than God, but he does assert that the Father is God, the Son is God, and that the Holy Ghost is God, and yet that they are not three Gods, but one God.

The author, like the rest of his Calvinistic friends, confounds *facts* with *mysteries*, and *mysteries* with *facts*, and would fondly persuade his readers that they believe things which they cannot understand. "Tell me *how* that candle burns?" I answer, it is a *fact* that the candle burns, but it is a separate question as to *how* it burns. A mere ignoramus knows, that the tallow and the cotton are so far from being equal to the atmospheric air, that they can produce *no light* without it, and that the atmospheric air and the tallow will make an *excellent light* without any cotton. Mr. Whitecross, in the depths of his philosophy, must believe the *fact*, that the bones are formed in the womb, but if he will tell me that he believes *how* they are formed, he will much oblige me, for at present I only know the *fact*, and must confine my faith to it, but I cannot believe the *how*, until he or some other sage will *explain* it.

All who believe the New Testament, must believe that there will be a *day of judgment*; this is one distinct proposition; but *when* that day will be, is another proposition, and the same authority informs us, that this is known to the *Father only*. Does any man, then, believe *when* it will be? That he cannot do until it is *revealed*, or until he can *explain* when it will take place. He may, perhaps, like a certain learned Bible-reader, say, that it will be the *last day*. But a common-sense person, feeling that this pitiable quibble gives him no new information whatever, will naturally ask, *when will the last day be*? Will it be in fifty, one hundred, or one thousand years? Tell me this, and then you



will tell me *when* it will be. Unitarians only ask Trinitarians to tell them, where, in the Scriptures, is the doctrine of the Trinity stated as a *fact*, and they do not press them to tell *how* it can be, that three persons, each of them God, can make but one God. Let the one point be settled before the attention is directed to the other.

The second illustration is very poor. The introduction of Isaiah ix. 6, is what might be expected from a man of prejudice. Without shewing that some of the best Biblical critics do not apply this verse to Christ, and that many of the best Hebrew scholars have condemned the authorized translation, I want to know if any man in his right reason will say, that God was ever a *child*, or was *born*, or was a *son given*! It is fortunate that even the received translation does not say this:—it only says that the *name* of the *child* should be *called* the mighty God. This was no new thing among the Israelites, for the names of many of their chief men had meanings similar to this. Brown's Dictionary of the Bible is a standard work among Trinitarians, and to his explanation of proper names I refer them in vindication of my remark. Being the mighty God, and being *by name called* the mighty God, are very different propositions. "Moses built an altar, and *called* the *name* of it JEHOVAH-nissi," but not even Mr. Whitecross himself will say, that the altar which Moses built *is* Jehovah. (Ex. xvii. 15.)

The third illustration is no more to the question or answer than the former one. The question and answer go upon the supposition, that *there are three persons in the Godhead*; and the proof-Catechism failing to give any satisfactory Scripture authority to support the doctrine, Mr. Whitecross labours by *fabrication*, *misapplication*, and *false quotation*, to supply the deficiency of divine revelation. If one part of divine revelation can be more pure and binding than another, I think the words of Christ should have the pre-eminence. Now in the solemn act of prayer, he said,—"*FATHER! this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*" If, then, the author of the Anecdotes will affirm, that "*the Son is the true God*," he must either prove that there are

*two true Gods*, or admit that he contradicts Christ. Nay more, if he can shew that the grammatical construction of the words which he quotes,—*this is the true God and eternal life*, will prove the supreme deity of the Son, and do not refer to the Father, then the *same* construction put upon the *same* words of the *same* Apostle, must prove that Jesus Christ is *Antichrist*. “Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. *This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*” Let Mr. Whitecross here put his Orthodox interpretation upon the words *this is*, if he dare; and if he dare not, let him take heed that he do not make the Apostle John use the same phrase in opposite senses. (see, 1st John v. 20, and 2d John 7.) Let him be cautious that he do not make enemies to the plain Gospel, by misquotations and misinterpretations;—that he do not put weapons into the hands of infidels, by representing a *child* that was *born* to be the mighty God; and that he do not speak of God being *in* the flesh and *out* of the flesh, as if HE could change his nature or his residence. Let him remember that God is *manifest* in all his works, and that HE was specially manifest in Christ, by the wonders and miracles which HE did *by* him.

I am an advocate for “the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible,” as the only rule to direct man in what he is to believe. B. B. B.

---

THE following article, which we extract, at the request of a subscriber, from “The Bury and Norwich Post,” is from the pen of a young Protestant Dissenting minister, lately placed at Bury, St. Edmund. Born and educated in Belfast, he had good opportunities of forming his opinions as well on Nonconformity as Church of Englandism; and we are pleased to find him not afraid to give them to the public, and the more especially as he has done it in Christian temper. We have a thousand times wondered how men, professing themselves the disciples of Christ, can change their religion with degrees of latitude and longitude, and accommodate their consciences to the established creed of the island or colony in which they may chance to reside. To be an Episcopalian in England, a

Presbyterian in Scotland, and a Roman Catholic in Canada, for fear of being a Dissenter, or from a desire to conform to the different establishments of the same state, we consider much the same as having no religion. Upon the same principle a man might be a Jew at Warsaw, a Mahometan at Constantinople, and a member of the Greek Church at St. Petersburg. And what is Mahometanism, or the doctrine of the Greek church, but a heterogeneous compound of human ambition and divine authority; and such must ever be the result of departing from the principle, that *the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants*. When we mention this fundamental principle, we must express our surprise that men, bound down by the *Overtures of a Synod*, or the *Decree of a King*, would ever refer to it. If they once admit a right to tax conscience, or to dictate articles to the church, it may as well be exercised by a pope, as a conclave or a synod.

EDITORS.

---

## THE CHURCH AND THE DISSENTERS.

*To the Editor of the Bury Post.*

SIR,—Having by accident seen a paragraph headed “THE CHURCH AND THE DISSENTERS,” quoted by one of your contemporaries from the *Standard*, calling upon the *Morning Chronicle* to explain its assertion “that the present time is unquestionably most favourable to the objects of the Dissenters,” and casting, at least by innuendo, some reflections upon the motives of that body, allow me through the medium of your columns, to state, as briefly as the subject will permit, the leading principles of dissent, and thus to satisfy the laudable curiosity of the *Standard* as to our present views with regard to the Church Establishment. I trust, however, that no remark which I may feel called upon to advance may be supposed to be dictated by personal feeling, or as having the most remote reference to any individuals in the Church, as private friendship alone, did no other motive dictate, would prevent me from attacking the Clergy of the Establishment, many of them being my much esteemed friends. Measures, not men, should be the motto of all writers—at least such is mine.

And first allow me to define what may be termed a Church Establishment. By a national religious establishment I mean that system of religion established by the law of the land. Not so much its peculiar doctrines and forms, as the means by which and the persons by whom it is established. In a word, a religion appointed by the state as *the* religion of the people at large. To *such* an establishment, as Dissenters, we most decidedly object. And here permit me to remark, that this objection does not militate, necessarily, against either the peculiar tenets, or the religious ceremonies of the church, *per se*. It only wars against the Church in reference to its connexion with the State, and against those *forms and ceremonies introduced in consequence of that union*. This is a distinction which has not been sufficiently attended to, or, to speak more truly, which has been studiously kept out of view in the discussion of this question. If, for example, the connexion between Church and State were this moment to be dissolved, such dissolution *would in no wise affect the episcopal form or government of the Church*. The Church as a church would still exist, and of course we are bound to conclude that *all her present members* (being as we take it conscientious adherents to her *episcopal form, and not merely as connected with the State*) would still adhere to that church to which they are at present attached. In Scotland Presbyterianism is the *established* religion, and yet there as here does *episcopacy* exist; the only difference between it in the two countries being, that in Scotland it is allowed to advance itself by its own intrinsic merits, whilst here it is incorporated with and supported by the State.

And now to justify our dissent from *such an Establishment*. By the Act of Supremacy passed in the year 1533, "the King or Queen of these realms is vested with all power to exercise all manner of ecclesiastical jurisdiction—and hath full power and authority to hear and determine all manner of causes ecclesiastical, and to reform and correct *all sin, error, heresy*, and enormities whatsoever, which by any manner of spiritual authority ought or may be lawfully reformed." Against this most anti-Christian decree we decidedly protest.

It gives the King of these realms a power which no man on earth can lay claim to, "without most high and most schismatical presumption," and therefore do we say to the church which recognizes such a claim, "whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto ye, more than unto God, judge ye." And moreover do we say, that if any church for the mere sake of commanding extensive temporal power and influence, acknowledge any human authority in matters of faith; or, if for the mean and despicable object of enriching itself, and raising *by these means* its members above their fellow-christians, it suffer any King or Government to make or amend, or in any wise interfere with its articles of faith; or to prescribe certain forms of worship, or any peculiar terms of communion; then does that church virtually renounce its allegiance to its Sovereign—Christ, and stand convicted of obeying as the doctrines of God the commandments of men.

But whence, may I ask, is the *right* of forming such an Establishment? Its supporters surely have not the temerity to found it upon Scripture. If so, "to the law and the testimony." Let them but name the passage and I shall be the first to yield assent to its commands. Instead, however, of finding it in the Scriptures, we may trace it rather to the age of Constantine, the first Roman Emperor who took the Christian religion under the power and protection of the State; and in this country we have only to refer to the reign of Henry VIII. to have the origin of this *right*. That Prince altered the national religion in direct opposition to the will, and we are to suppose the religious belief of his Clergy, who were Roman Catholics. Since his time we invariably find the sovereigns of this kingdom modelling and altering the forms and services of the church just as it suited their royal pleasure, so that new Acts were passed, new forms decreed, and what was declared to be error one day was declared by "Royal authority" to be truth the next!

Secondly, we dissent because we hold the strict and absolute right of private judgment. An Establishment, on the contrary, such as that now in existence, at least, presupposes the right of the King or Government to interfere with and regulate the religious opinions of the



people. This we hold to be utterly repugnant to the true design of all Government, to the dictates of sound reason, and the positive commands and precepts of Christianity. *Society*, we readily admit, cannot exist without Government; and we concede at once that the administration of the laws should be entrusted to a body of men whose peculiar duty it becomes to enforce their execution, and who consequently become responsible for their effective administration; but no such responsibility rests upon civil governors to provide for the *peculiar* religious instruction of the people, for no man or body of men can with any shew of reason, claim the right of imposing laws upon the conscience, and obliging men to worship their Creator otherwise than as that conscience dictates. The rights of conscience are from their very nature unalienable. They belong to man independently of all human laws or civil institutions. They are coeval with his birth, and inherent in his mental constitution, and can only be destroyed with the living principle itself. What then does any Government mean when it proclaims by Act of Parliament that all men must believe in certain formularies of faith? When it presumes to establish a *particular sect as the religion of the country*? Who gave to Government this right? The Almighty? Where and when? or through whom? Christ? The Gospel? Produce the passage and prove the right.

Thirdly, we dissent because we believe the Holy Scriptures to be the only rule of faith and practice. In direct opposition, however, to this fundamental principle of Christianity, do we find creed heaped upon creed in the formularies of the Church: some of them the very sublime of absurdity, and none of them expressed in the simple language of Holy Writ. The object, however, of these barriers of the Church of God, we are told, is to produce uniformity of faith. Uniformity of faith! As well might the helpless infant lay its hand upon the ocean's mane, and bid the waves be still. It is indeed the wildest chimera that ever bewildered the imagination of mortals. Mankind differ as widely in opinion as in features; and as varied as are the outlines of the human face, so diversified are the thoughts of the human intellect.

But the history of the Establishment itself is the best refutation of the practicability of this boasted uniformity. There is not a single article laid down by the Church as necessary to salvation that has not been impugned and openly refuted by numbers of its own dignitaries! But may I enquire, does this Established Church, thus guarded by impassable barriers of creeds and confessions, rank amongst its members the great mass of the people, (for whom it was doubtless designed) or the enlightened and intellectual portion of the community? I fearlessly answer IT DOES NOT. *The Church of England is itself but a sect.* In Ireland its members do not amount to half a million, whilst those belonging to other bodies equal six millions and a half! Yet in Ireland it is the Established Church! In Scotland its numbers do not amount to more than 50,000, and there it is a dissenting Church; (and upon what grounds of justice and reason it should not be so in Ireland I leave for more subtle casuists than myself to determine); and even in England—prelatic England—it is, if I mistake not, outnumbered by the Dissenters! And yet for the support of this Establishment, which does not embrace *one-third* of the united population, ten millions per annum are required to be paid! And we are asked what objects can we have in view?

Fourthly, we dissent because we hold that the Church Establishment, as at present constituted, is directly opposed to the simplicity, purity, and spirit of the Scriptures. We esteem it to be a mere creature of, and altogether dependent upon, the State. And what are the consequences of this union? “1st. Many will suspect the whole to be a mere political trick: priests hired by the State are a standing army to keep down obnoxious opinions. 2d. The preferred sect will not be selected on account of the purity or liberality of its creed; but of its fitness for the purposes of the civil governor. 3d. The great ends of public instruction will be too often neglected for sycophantic attendance on the great, who dispose of Church honours. 4th. The remuneration of the clergy will be *oppressive and unequal*, proportioned neither to labour nor merit.”—*Fox's Lectures.*

Such are the practical results of the incorporation of the Church and State. The whole constitution of the

Church, we may thus perceive, is temporal. Its head is mortal; its power is upheld merely by the laws; the Bishops have their thrones and palaces, their courts and chancellors, their registrars and menials. It is indeed a massy and imposing edifice; but do its foundations rest upon the basis of eternal truth? If so, where do we find in the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus "any precedent for the long and pompous trains of Archbishops, Chancellors, Deans, Chapters, Canons, Chanters, Prebendaries, and Vicars?" Do not one and all of these, from the lowest stipendiary to "his Grace," who rears his "mitred front in court and senate," savour not of the simplicity of the Gospel, but rather of a temporal polity—a kingdom of this world?

Such are our reasons for dissent, and I trust that they are of that nature which must at least command the respect of even those who differ from us most widely in opinion. We have no sinister object in view in our exertions to put down this established corporation; we conceive *such an establishment* to be radically wrong, and therefore do we, "through good report and evil report," persevere in our endeavours to get introduced such a measure of reform as may enable all who profess the name of Christ to subscribe alike to its opinions and support. If a Church Establishment were to be formed upon a broad and Christian basis, then should our chief grounds of dissent be removed, and then could we conscientiously enter into the bosom of the Church. Ours is no *sectarian* object. We wish to diffuse Christian liberty and light amongst all mankind. We desire to render man more capable of knowing and appreciating his moral dignity, and to lead him to *feel* his relations alike to God and his fellow-man. This is our object, and this alone, and they who would fasten upon us the odious charge of being desirous of spoliation, or of being traitors to our country's interests, or as anxious to put down all existing institutions, know full well the malignant falsity of the accusation. We only desire the advancement of truth, the diffusion of universal happiness. We only contend in the spirit of our non-completed, though glorious reformation, and but follow up the views and tread in the hallowed steps of Luther and Melancthon, of Zuinglius and Calvin. We desire to uproot,

with that moral lever, whose power is irresistible, the whole fabric of that system, the foundations of which were cemented with human blood.

“ The spirit of Reform is now awake,  
And spreads himself, and shall not sleep again ;  
But through the idle mesh of power shall break  
Like billows o’er the Asian monarch’s chain,  
Till men are filled with Him, and feel how vain,  
Instead of the pure heart and innocent hands,  
Are all the proud and pompous modes to gain  
The smile of Heaven—till a new age expands  
Its white and holy wings above the peaceful lands.”

I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

Bury, October 19, 1832.

R. M. M.

#### CALUMNIES OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBY- TERIAN.

The *Orthodox Presbyterian* for October last, under the head *religious intelligence*, has made a malicious attack upon the Remonstrants, and I feel myself called upon briefly to expose the slander, through your impartial and more liberal pages.

Many of your readers must know, that there has existed for some seventy or eighty years, in the county of Armagh, a Presbyterian Congregation distinguished by the name of the united congregation of *Creggan and Newtownhamilton*. The members of this society were separated in several instances by a distance of from ten to fifteen miles, but had for their accommodation two meeting-houses, in which their minister officiated alternately. From the increase of the Presbyterian population, the injurious tendency of having public worship only once in the fortnight in each of the meeting-houses, and the great inconvenience to which the minister was put in the discharge of his duties, the proprietors of the respective houses, came, some time ago, to the mutual agreement of separating into two distinct congregations. By the arrangement, the Rev. Mr. M’Clean and the Royal Bounty fell to the lot of the Creggan Congregation, thereby leaving the Newtownhamilton society at liberty, as they wished, to choose a pastor for themselves.

This arrangement was not long completed, when some discontented spirits of the Newtownhamilton church, encouraged by letters from some of the *ring-leaders* of the General Synod, began to revive unfortunate pecuniary matters of seventeen years standing, in which Mr. M'Cleane had been involved, but which had been investigated at great length by his Presbytery, and which were finally settled by the Court of Chancery: No new charges of any kind were ever named. Mr. M'Cleane having obtained possession of some of the letters, and conceiving that certain persons had entered into a conspiracy destructive of his interests and usefulness, instituted a civil action against them, which excited their associates to greater violence in a less secret and unlawful way. He and the Congregation of Creggan, persuaded that plots were concerted to break up the settlement which they had made, came to the resolution of applying for admission into the Remonstrant Presbytery of Armagh. Under these circumstances, the General Synod's Presbytery of Armagh, aware that one of their members was implicated in the civil action which was instituted, and alarmed lest Mr. M'Cleane should not only escape from their spiritual tyranny, but enter the civil court with clean hands, passed upon him, and in his absence, the sentence of suspension *sine die*. They not only did this, but they used every exertion in their power to influence the Newtownhamilton people to deny the covenant which was made, and to claim connexion with the wandering sheep of Creggan, and thereby save them from the infectious communion of the Remonstrants. Such is a brief narrative of the case of Mr. M'Cleane and the Congregation of Creggan on the one hand, and the Calvinistic Presbytery of Armagh and the Congregation of Newtownhamilton, on the other.

Will the *Orthodox Presbyterian* venture, either by pious frauds or shameless assertions, to say, that any Remonstrant minister or layman had the most distant concern in any of these matters? For the honour of human nature, bad as he is, I think he will not. What then, it may be asked, is the charge of the *Orthodox Presbyterian* against the Remonstrants? It is, that "Mr. M'Claine, of the united Congregation of Creggan



and Newtownhamilton, who, though suspended by his Church, was so far received and countenanced by the *Arian party*, that they appointed a Committee to visit one of the congregations in which he officiated, and put him to a mock trial." Pray, readers of the *Orthodox Presbyterian*, how did this visit originate? Did the Remonstrants *volunteer* their services to seduce Mr. M'Clellan and the Congregation of Creggan to join them? No; "Mr. M'Clellan and several respectable commissioners of the Creggan congregation, applied for admission into the Remonstrant Presbytery of Armagh." Did that Presbytery receive Mr. M'Clellan into their communion? No; they only granted him a temporary shelter "until the meeting of the Remonstrant Synod," which was to take place in little more than two months after the application. Was this unchristian?

But why did the Remonstrant Synod interfere in this matter? Because the Remonstrant Presbytery of Armagh not only referred the case to them, but because Mr. M'Clellan and two respectable commissioners from the Congregation of Creggan, applied to the Synod at its stated meeting, complaining by authenticated memorials, "of persecution, misrepresentation, and attempts at unwarrantable jurisdiction, on the part of the General Synod's Presbytery of Armagh." Would the General Synod of Ulster pay no attention to such an application from a Remonstrant minister and his Congregation? Would any Synod condemn men unheard, or refuse to read a respectful memorial appealing to them for protection and justice?

Still it may be enquired, why did not the Remonstrant Synod decide the matter at their stated meeting? I reply, that an individual, complaining of Mr. M'Clellan's unfair dealings in the old matters of 1815 or 1816, presented a memorial to the Synod, but *disappeared* before the investigation commenced; which influenced the Synod to appoint a committee to go to Creggan, but not to Newtownhamilton, which would have saved the members of committee twelve miles travelling. Of the time and place of the meeting the Creggan congregation had public notice, and the complainant and other individuals more particularly concerned, were advertised of it by written documents. Was this any thing like the

midnight cabals and private letters of the Morgans, Cookes, Hendersons, and Stewarts, in the cases of Greyabbey and Narrow-water? So far from it, that the principal accuser not attending at Creggan, the Committee adjourned their meeting to Newry, to give him another opportunity of bringing forward his charges.

It is not true, as insinuated by the *Orthodox Presbyterian*, that the committee addressed the passions of the multitude, for not a member made any observations that could be called a speech. But I can tell him what they did; they soberly examined witnesses; and it is right for him to know, that his brethren of the Newtownhamilton fold, who a few weeks before were rejoicing in the prospect of having a minister of their own, flocked up to the Creggan Meeting-house, and treated the seatholders and other members rudely and improperly. Had a Pagan or Mahometan witnessed their conduct, he would have been in no great love with orthodoxy. It is true that the committee have not yet published any report of their proceedings, nor has the proper time arrived. If they did not attend the adjourned meeting, which was fixed to be held at Newry, it should be known far and wide, that this was at the request of Mr. McClean, who dreaded bloodshed between the two congregations. It should also be remembered that if a connexion was solicited, the Remonstrant Synod had neither act nor part in the matter, but that it was entreated both *first* and *last*, by Mr. McClean and the people of Creggan.

The question said to be put by an "honest and unsophisticated countryman" to one of the committee, respecting the divinity of Christ, was fairly answered according to the shewing of the *Orthodox Presbyterian* himself. If a man believe in the *divinity* of Christ, should he deny it? and if he do not believe in his *deity*, should he profess it? If the Congregation of Creggan declined forming a connexion with the Remonstrants because one of their ministers would not tell a lie, I rejoice at the issue; but if it refused because he was not a Trinitarian, could the *Orthodox Presbyterian* find no such minister in the General Synod? He knows right well there are severals; and surely he will admit, that if they will *lie* on the subject, they are unfit for the

Remonstrants; and that, if they tell the *truth*, they should be no longer suffered to be members of his church.

But the question was not put by a member of the Congregation of Creggan, nor by "an honest and unsophisticated countryman," but by a *Doctor*, who, if not learned, is at least subtle, technical, and in the training of some experienced empiric.

A sentence or two, and I have done with the *Orthodox Presbyterian* for the present. Whenever thieves desire to meddle with a neighbour's property, they raise the cry of mad dog against the faithful animal which is his watch and his sentinel; so, when the advocates of reputed orthodoxy wish to excite hatred and ill will against any churches which *stand fast by the Bible*," and refuse their yoke of bondage, they cry "*the Arian party*." But, is there any thing more harsh in the sound of the term Arius, than that of Calvin? No; the professor of music will pronounce in favour of the former. Was Calvin better authorised to direct the faith and worship of Christians than Arius? No, not so well; for Arius lived more than *one thousand years* before Calvin was born, and ere Popery had corrupted the church; whereas Calvin was brought up in the church of Rome, and separated from it, rejecting the power of human authority in matters of faith, and avowing the *sufficiency of sacred scripture and the right of private judgment, in the concerns of religion*:—principles which his followers have long since forsaken, though they find it advantageous to retain his name. Was Calvin more exemplary and amiable in his life and conversation than Arius? No, not so much so; for he brought the learned and virtuous Servetus to the stake, who was also a reformer, for writing against some of his peculiar opinions: whereas Arius, according to the opinion of Dr. Maclaine, an authority which Calvinists frequently quote, "was a victim to the resentment of his enemies,"—who were the reputedly orthodox of his day,—"and was destroyed by poison." Every comparison is thus in favour of the persecuted Arius.

Do the Remonstrants, however, take the creed of Arius as their rule in the doctrines of religion? The *Orthodox Presbyterian* knows as well as he knows the

corruptions of his own heart, that the Remonstrants reject the creed of Arius as well as that of Calvin, and that they keep to the general principles of Calvin and the other reformers; viz.—“the sufficiency of Scripture and the right of private judgment in matters of faith.” They do not pretend, like the General Synod of Ulster, and God knows but it is a mere and hollow pretence,—to uniformity of opinion in disputed doctrines; no, but sensible of their own fallibility, and “*standing fast by the Bible, without note or comment,*” as their *only creed*, they allow each minister and congregation to judge for themselves, believing that they must answer for themselves alone, and not for others.

A FRIEND TO GOSPEL LIGHT.

---

#### REFLECTIONS ON THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S DEITY.

THAT a supernatural revelation of the will of God would be clear and intelligible we might reasonably suppose, whether we consider its origin or its end. Emanating from Omniscient wisdom, we might expect it to bear the stamp of its author, and to betray nothing of the imperfection and inadequacy that ever attach to human institutions and instructions; and being designed to teach righteousness to mankind, and to turn them from their follies and vices to the worship and service of the true God, we might look for an exposition of doctrines and precepts so prominent and palpable, that “he may run who readeth them.” Such characteristics I can clearly discover in the Christian dispensation, as I learn it from the inspired writings; but in the form into which the superstition of ignorant men, and the policy of their spiritual but unspiritualized teachers have moulded it, it has become alike unworthy of its author, and ineffectual in its end—a system of religion that demands the prostration of our intellectual powers, the extinction of our moral feelings, and the persecution of our dissenting brethren, cannot be a genuine resolution from the God of nature and of man. We may well suspect that the gold of gospel truth has become dim, and the fine gold has been changed, when we see the self-constituted authorities in matters of faith,

stamping their own extravagant views with the impress of Orthodoxy, and dictating to their submissive adherents the adoption of doctrines which by general admission, are rather those of *inference* than express declaration. Among the doctrines to which I allude, that of the Essential Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ is perhaps the most striking. It has been set up as the pillar of the Christian's faith, an implicit reception of it has been made a term of eternal salvation, its rejectors have been denounced, not only as heretics, but infidels and rebels against the truth of Heaven, the 'powers that be' have ever upheld it by the nod of their favour and the sword of their authority, and to this day the confessions of our principal Churches are stained with anathemas of everlasting damnation against him who questions the *identity* of God and his Messiah. Now, when a doctrine is put forth as so prominent a feature of one holy religion, and at the same time enforced by penalties of so awful and enduring a kind, we might at least expect to find the principle itself, if not the means of its promulgation, sanctioned by its author—and great must be our surprise to find that so far from preaching the importance and necessity of a belief in his Deity while on earth, he does not even communicate the doctrine to his immediate disciples. In the beautiful and instructive sermon on the mount, with which our blessed Master may be said to have begun his public ministry, we can discover no allusion, the most remote, to his divine nature; he explains to his hearers the spiritual character of his religion, and, with a power of expression not surpassed in the range of the sacred writings, he enforces some of the most important precepts of Christianity—but of that doctrine, which is now deemed the pillar of Gospel Truth, there is not a single word. After he had chosen his disciples, and commissioned them to go forth to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, 'and preach the reign of Heaven,' we do not read that he gave them any intimation of his Godship. But to pass over his many public discourses and his conversations, as they have been detailed by the Evangelists, let us consider what the opinions of his disciples were respecting him when he had 'finished the work that was given him to



do,' and was about to lay down his life. We read that when he was dragged before the authorities of the country to receive his unjust sentence, the eleven gave themselves up to despondency, and were scattered abroad as sheep without a shepherd. Is it probable that such would have been their feelings and such their condition, if they had believed Jesus Christ to be the Almighty God? So far indeed were they from thinking that he was God, that they did not even suppose that he had power to raise himself from the dead. If we refer to the last chapter of Luke's gospel, we will be convinced on this point. Early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and her companions repaired to the tomb of their beloved Master, and when they found not his body where it had been laid, they were *perplexed*; and when they told the eleven what they had seen and heard "their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not;" and Peter when he ran to the sepulchre and saw that the body was not there, "*wondered in himself at that which was come to pass.*" Two of the disciples also meet Jesus on their way to Emmaus, and "their eyes being holden that they should not know him," they speak to him of their crucified master, and describe him as "a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," and say they had trusted that it *had* been he which should have redeemed Israel." Is this the language of men persuaded of Christ's omnipotence? Could they be aware of his Deity, and yet speak of him only as a "mighty prophet," and banish their fondly cherished hopes that he should be the redeemer of their nation? Now either Jesus taught his Supreme Divinity, or he did not. If he did not, it cannot be an essential doctrine of the Christian religion; and if he did, his intimate friends and constant companions understood him not—and this latter supposition involves a reflection on the moral character of our Saviour, which the most heretical Unitarians would tremble to insinuate.

Inasmuch as it appears from the portion of Scripture just referred to, that the disciples of Christ did not understand him as teaching his equality with his Father, it would be superfluous to advert to expressions that seem to favour so strange a supposition. We

cannot imagine that we are better judges of their import than those in whose vernacular tongue they were spoken, and for whose immediate instruction they were intended. But there are two appellations of Christ frequently occurring in the New Testament, which are triumphantly adduced by the advocates of his Deity, I mean the "Son" and the "only begotten Son of God." It is true that when Jesus called himself the Son of God, the Jews sought to kill him, alleging that he made himself equal with God. But we will be convinced that they only understood him as arrogating to himself the authority of his God in instructions, when we read John (19-7) that they brought his offence under the law respecting blasphemy, and that in his own justification he quotes, Psal. 82, 6; and when we find that in the language of Scripture all good men are called sons of God.\* Jesus, as being eminent above all others, may be styled *the* Son of God. In Mat. 27, 54, the centurion remarks of Christ "*truly this was the son of God;*" and in the parallel passage of Luke it is written, "*certainly this was a righteous man.*" I shall be satisfied on the meaning of these two expressions to add the opinion of the celebrated Parkhurst, a man not more distinguished for his critical knowledge than for his orthodox views of Scripture, having published a treatise on the "Divinity and the existence of Christ" in reply to Dr. Priestley. "Though," says he, "I am not ignorant how strenuously some great and good men have insisted that this term, *only begotten*, relates to the *divinity* or *divine nature* in Christ, yet truth obliges me to declare that I apprehend it *strictly* and *properly* refers to his *humanity*, which, as it was *begotten of God*, was therefore the *Son of God.*"

When we pass from the Evangelists to the Acts of the Apostles, we can discover nothing more particular on the personal dignity of our Lord. We have here recorded the addresses of the Apostles to the unconverted Jews and Gentiles, to the wise and the unwise. When Peter stood up among the Eleven to preach Christ to the Jews and those that dwelt at Jerusalem, he represented

---

\* See Exod. iv. 22. 23. Is. xliii, 6, and xlv, 11, 12. Jer. xxxi. 9. Hos. xi. 1. Jer. xxxi, 1. 2 Cor. vi, 18. John I. 12. Rom. viii, 14, &c.

him as “a man approved of God among them by miracles and wonders, and signs which *God did by him*, in the midst of them.” In various instances they declare to the people that God raised up Jesus and exalted him to his own right hand; but such expressions do, of necessity, imply a distinction between the Father and his Son. And the words of Paul to Cornelius, when teaching him the principles of the Christian Faith, are peculiarly clear on the subject; “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the devil; for God was with him.” Such is the tenour of all the Apostles’ teaching; and, when we consider that the ancient prophecies never led the Jews to expect the Almighty God on earth, that this people were most tenacious and even jealous, of the doctrine of God’s Unity,—when we can discover no endeavour on the part of Christ and his Apostles to inculcate his Deity, although using many expressions, apparently at least, contradictory to it—and can perceive no opposition to their religion on the ground of their complex Godhead—may we not justly wonder at the importance which has since been attached to a belief in the Equality and Identity of the Son with the Father, and in the Trinity of the Unity of Godhead?

If we compare the Christian Religion as it is propounded in the Inspired Writings, with that which is set forth in the Articles and Confessions of Faith, which have been adopted by different Churches, we must be struck with the contrast. In the one we discern a divine simplicity, and a happy adaptation to the circumstances of mankind; in the other we see a complicated and abstruse system of doctrines, repulsive to all save those on whom their reception has been forced by the anathemas of a dogmatical priesthood. Ignorance, ever the parent of error, has metamorphosed the Gospel of Jesus Christ into a monster which reason cannot contemplate but with abhorrence, and never can it recover the beauty and the comeliness of its primitive form, till men “search the Scriptures” as the *only* rule of Faith—“they are they which testify of Christ.”

DELTA.

MR. SAMUEL TUCKER'S EXPOSTULATORY  
LETTER.

MR. TUCKER is well known in the North of Ireland and elsewhere as a spirited polemic, and his "Expostulatory Letter, addressed to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference," and just fresh from the Liverpool press, will not lessen his reputation as a writer. His sentiments are fast approaching to plain Unitarianism, and if, in the publication before us, he is sometimes a little hard to be understood, he many times lays down bold and definite positions, from which it will not be easy to dislodge him, and which are totally destructive of Trinitarianism. He invites his opponents to the discussion of the points at issue, and puts them in possession of *six propositions of truth*, which he asserts, and will endeavour to maintain and defend." We extract the following,—“The sole, eternal, independent, self-possessed, and supreme Godhead, of the GOD and FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ’ ”—“The essential, as well as official inferiority of the SON of GOD, to his ‘GOD and FATHER,’ and non-eternity of the SON’s existence.”

These are startling propositions from a man “who was upwards of 30 years a preacher in the Conference connection.” Remembering the confusion of mind under which he once laboured, but from which he is gradually emancipating himself, he says to his old associates,—“‘You worship you know not what.’ A compound tripartite Deity; or a Trinity of Supreme Gods, without a Mediator.”

EDITORS,

## TO SUBSCRIBERS.

THE Editors of the *Bible Christian*, having brought their labours almost to the close of a *third volume*, feel happy in making their acknowledgements to their *Subscribers and Correspondents*. The testimonies of approbation which they have received from different parts of the United Kingdom, are to them proofs, that though they are labouring without hire, they are not labouring in vain. These testimonies are stimulating them to make greater preparations and better arrangements, to render the publication more deserving in future of

the support of their *Subscribers*. If some friends, whom they had a right to count upon as *Correspondents*, have disappointed them, they gratefully own that others, of whom they had little expectation, have been most valuable contributors.

While reputed Orthodoxy is lowering her tone in defence of the *human inventions* which were brought to maturity during the dark ages, and which still form the creed of the Athanasian, Calvinistic, and Roman Catholic churches, the advocates of *Bible Christianity* ought not to be silent. In spite of the calumnies of those, whose worldly interest it is to uphold the *Overtures* of fallible, and erring, and changing synods, and who are so glaringly inconsistent as to advocate one day *nothing but the Bible* as a perfect rule of faith, and *human articles* as a necessary appendage, the next,—the Editors of the *Bible Christian* will be found at their duty, the fearless and consistent vindicators of Divine Revelation, as best expressing in its own pure and unadulterated language, every *doctrine* and every *precept* which the disciples of Jesus should profess or obey.

Though the Editors purpose to address their readers at greater length in the next number—they have, in the mean time, to urge upon the attention of their agents and other friends in different parts of the country, the importance of having accounts settled with the *Publisher*.

*It will be taken for granted, that the present Subscribers shall continue to take the work for the year 1833, unless notice to the contrary be sent to the Publisher, before the 20th of January; or to the Agent in the country, who furnishes them with the numbers.*

*New Subscribers will please forward their names either to Mr. Archer, the publisher, High-street, Belfast, or to our district coadjutors, before the above day.*

EDITORS.

#### OBITUARY.

On Monday 13th August last, in consequence of being attacked the previous morning by one of his own cattle, in the 77th year of his age, Mr. John Taylor, of Knockbracken. He was a useful and intelligent member of society, and highly esteemed by a large circle of acquaintance.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Several valuable articles have come to hand, some of which were too late for the present number, but none of which, so far as we have examined, are unfit for our pages.



THE  
**Bible Christian.**

---

No. XII.

JANUARY, 1832.

VOL. II.

---

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

---

EVANGELICAL RETALIATION.

THE human mind is not less capable of discerning moral than natural truth, nor of admiring mental excellence, than corporeal beauty. If it has cultivated morality with less success than other sciences, or has acquired a more delicate perception of beauty and harmony in forms and sounds, than in sentiment and action; this is not to be ascribed to any original defect. It would be strange, indeed, if we laboured under a natural incapacity for cultivating and relishing those branches of knowledge, from which our felicity and perfection are to spring. The inferiority of our attainments, and the confusion of our ideas on morals and religion, arise from a different cause. The principles and facts of Natural Science, may be subjected to the senses, exposed to the touch, or vibrate upon the ear. The Mathematician, though treating of abstract quantities, and incorporeal forms, can represent them with truth and accuracy to the eye. The various Professors of Natural Science, and the Fine Arts, can introduce their several discoveries and inventions to the mind in the most pleasing manner, and by the easiest avenues. For Moral Truth, it must study itself, therefore is Moral Truth, less diligently studied, and less distinctly comprehended. The Natural Sciences are employed in giving present pleasure, and external accommodation. Mankind are more sensible to present than posthumous gratifications, more keen for sensual than mental, external than internal enjoyment. Therefore, are the Arts and Sciences which minister to innocent, or even guilty luxury, prosecuted with the keenest avidity. Whether we perceive the excellence, of a moral and of a natural principle, the worth of a good action, and

the truth of a mathematical proposition by the same faculty, it is not my purpose to enquire. It is enough to know, that we can distinguish by nature, between moral good, and evil. But it may not be unpleasing to remark, that as almost all our other perceptions are attended by a sensation of pleasure and pain peculiar to each, so are our moral perceptions accompanied with a peculiar feeling. As the sublime and beautiful, in works of nature and art, necessarily excite admiration and love, so do the heroic and the gentle virtues. But though we call these sensations by the same name, they are very different: no grandeur, or symmetry of form, can occasion such sensations as we feel, upon the performance, or even the relation of a generous action: no degree of deformity, in inanimate matter, can excite the compassion and anxiety, which afflict us, when we behold the meanest living creature in an agony; but conceive his misery to be occasioned by a cruel and treacherous enemy, and you have still a different sensation, a sensation of indignation and resentment, if it be occasioned by ourselves, will feel a still more painful pang of anguish and remorse. As the perception of objects by all our senses, is attended with a feeling of pleasure, when the object is suited to the organ, as food to the palate; or of pain, when it is unnatural, or threatens injury, as of the meridian sun to a tender eye; so do a perception and a consciousness of base or worthy sentiments and actions, excite a pleasing or painful feeling in the mind. Conscience has therefore been happily denominated a sense, and to distinguish it from others, the moral sense.

Moral and religious truths, are the natural objects of the mind, as colours are of the eye; and if uncorrupted, it would discern virtue from vice, as the eye distinguishes light from darkness. As one eye has a clearer perception of proportion, or can more nicely discriminate between different kinds and degrees of beauty, or as one ear can trace the thread of harmony through more intricate mazes, and as both may attain an extraordinary degree of excellence by habit; so the great points of morality and religion are obvious to every pure unhacknied mind; and their most difficult principles will disclose themselves to one habituated to the study of truth, and the practice of virtue. Such a one will detect the slightest

shades of meanness in a splendid action ; and discern the slender veins of honour, which often illuminate and marble the blackness of the most unworthy character. Such is the degree of penetration, which an unadulterated mind might attain, though endowed with no superiority of intellectual power. Whence then, you will say, arise the various errors, and the confused conceptions which warp and distract the most enlightened philosophers upon such subjects? How comes it to pass, that we do not actually agree in our judgment of actions or sentiments as of colours? This is not the fault of nature. It is owing to evil habits, to the indulgence of unworthy affections, and a contaminating intercourse with a corrupted world. These stain, and clog the complexion, and warp the form of the mind to such a degree, that it is no longer able to exert its powers, and will scarcely believe, that it is possessed of them. Those principles then become difficult and obscure, which to the mind, in its native state, would have appeared simple and clear. It then requires great reach of thought, as well as vigorous exertions of resolution, to extricate our minds from the maze and labyrinth of error, in which we have involved ourselves, to abstract ourselves from the complicated interests which are become familiar to our minds, to see the truth of the plainest moral axioms, and to state them in such a masterly, unembarrassed and impartial manner, as to command assent and defy prevarication. This is the province of true wisdom. Thus to rekindle the lamp of the Lord is one object of revelation. This was the business of the law and the prophets, though prosecuted in a tedious and circuitous manner, in compliance with the wayward creatures they had to instruct. This was the occupation of those celebrated men, among the Greeks and Romans, who most eminently deserved the name of philosophers, because they were smitten with the sacred love of wisdom, and preferred her to every meretricious allurements, every sensual pleasure, and courted her on account of her native unadorned charms. They laboured to return to a state of nature, and to dispel the mist, which a base communication with the world had spread over the minds of men.

If those men among christians, who retired from the world to caves or to convents, had made this use of their

solitude, to keep aloof from degrading prejudices, embarrassing interests, and sordid cares, and to study and delineate, the lovely forms of virtue and religion, how different, how superior, would have been their merit, whatever might have been their reputation with a degenerate, and superstitious age. Such men would readily have discerned the nature and excellence of moral truth and beauty: and been able without any uncommon intellectual powers to enlighten the world. Light would have arisen out of their obscurity. They would have clearly discerned those principles, which a worldly mind could never have discovered; but which, when once disclosed, would have been universally approved. Such men, would make our philosophers, our men of mere letters wonder, that they never perceived that, which, when disclosed, they would acknowledge to be true and simple.

Those genuine principles of wisdom our Lord brought to light, and stamped with the seal of divine authority, yet so darkened are our understandings, that we cannot see their excellence. Of this kind are the precepts to love our enemies, to do good to those, who spitefully use us and persecute us, and to pray for those who curse us, which considered as general rules, are evidently calculated to produce universal happiness.

Of this kind also is that admired and neglected maxim which completes the system of *Evangelical Retaliation* "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."\* Matt. vii. 12. Jewish retaliation was, evil for evil, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but evangelical retaliation is good for evil, not railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; do as you would be

---

\* We meet with an approximation to this precept in ancient writers, both Jews and Gentiles. In the book of Tobit, we find this precept: "do to no man that which thou hatest." When a Gentile besought Hillel, a great Jewish Doctor, who lived before our Saviour's time, to instruct him in a few words, in the sum and substance of the Law, he answered, "what is hateful to yourself, do not to others, for this is the whole Law." A similar sentiment is ascribed to some of the Heathens: Socrates says, "converse with your inferiors as you would have your superiors converse with you." Another being asked, how we should behave to our friends? replied, "as you wish them to behave to you."

done by. When you are tempted to indulge any of your passions at the expense of a neighbour, you should substitute yourself in his place, and consider whether, in such a situation, you would think it just or honourable, that he should act in the same manner with regard to you. You are, for instance, to divest yourself, as much as possible, of the avarice and rigour of a creditor, and to blend them with the feelings of a miserable and unfortunate debtor, and then strike the balance of your account, and instruct your agent upon the mode of proceeding.

When you find yourself inflamed with the passions of anger or revenge, and see the unfortunate object of your rage lying at your mercy, suppress your resentment, sheath your sword, fold your arms, calmly consider what would have been your sentiments, your wishes, your prayers, had *you* been the victim, even the guilty victim; think how you would lament your folly, how bitterly you would repent of your offence—how earnestly you would supplicate for pardon—with what gratitude and affection you would repay a generous adversary: think too, how many pleas you would devise in your own defence,—the infirmity of human nature—the violence of passion—the weakness of principle—the inadvertence and inconsistency of virtue—the errors which arise from virtue herself, when misunderstood. Lay yourself prostrate on the earth, put a scourge into the hand of your enemy—dictate the punishment which he shall inflict on you, and you may then safely inflict the same on your brother who hath trespassed against you. Go further, consider that it is possible, to some may be probable, to your own judge perhaps certain, that the supposed offender is innocent. And then put yourself in his place—consider him as the object of your unjust, cruel, ungenerous resentment—reflect upon the anguish of suffering, insulted innocence; and you will soon feel a keener anguish—the shame, the remorse, the horror, the despair excited by the base, unjust, unmerciful conduct into which your passion might have betrayed you. In short, this maxim makes our self-love, our partialities, and our resentments the instruments of Virtue. It employs those motives to set us right which have led us astray. It retains our selfishness to plead on the side of generosity. For it is a rule calculated for the benefit



of every man who confesses himself to be imperfect and liable to error. It shows it to be every man's interest, that the rules of religion should be observed; for it secures the same indulgence to me, which it requires me to show to another. Nay, more, it secures me greater benefits than it requires me to bestow; for every man is liable to suffer more injury than he can inflict, and certainly derives more pleasure from the kindness of others than he could from their sufferings. Surely it is better for me, that every man should treat me as he would have himself treated, than that I should exchange the protection of this law for the diabolical gratification of tormenting two or three, who may have injured or offended me. No man could wish to have this divine law abrogated, except he were independent of the power or the cunning of his fellow-creatures, exempt from accident and calumny, superior to the laws of nature, safe from the visitation of God: for any of these might reduce him to the state of a suppliant to the meanest of his inferiors. And though it were possible for him to be in this independent state, the wisdom as well as the equity of this law would still remain unimpeached, even with respect to him. The higher a man rises, to the fewer injuries is he subject, and therefore, you will say, the less occasion has he for the protection of this impartial law; but has he not also the fewer injuries to resent? What a fiend-like spirit must that man possess who wishes for liberty to inflict, though not liable to suffer, injuries; who repines that he is bound to behave with kindness to those who never did, and never can, provoke his resentment? So that if you be poor or weak, you are the very person for whose protection this law was framed, and who will have most frequent cause to resort to it for defence. If you be rich and powerful, it secures these advantages to you without laying you under any restraint, that any man can regret, who is worthy to live. Finally, if all men acted by this rule, there would be no injuries inflicted, and consequently, no forbearance required. An universal compliance with the law, would render the law itself unnecessary.

The same argument will apply to all the other branches of the moral law. If a man will consider them as enacted for universal observance, he will no longer

hesitate to admit their wisdom and their benignity; but he forgets the numerous instances in which they offer him protection, and repines at those in which they impose restraint, though this very restraint on *his* passions affords the like security to others. What is the spirit of those laws? Do not steal—do not kill—do not bear false witness. Do they not forbid all men to rob, murder, or defame him? Let every man consider them in this light, as made in his own favour, and he will no longer question the equity of any precept of this class. This is questioned only, when we wish for liberty to injure our neighbour. But take the whole of life together, and you are a gainer. In this traffic of kindness and justice, the balance is in every man's favour. To murmur at such impartial regulations, betrays a narrow, as well as a vicious mind. What! should I be willing to have all men released from these laws? Shall I complain that every man is enjoined to love me as he loves himself? and this though I be his enemy; yet what rule is more generally rejected both in speculation and practice than that which commands us to love our enemies? Is it not better that all men should love me, than that, at the expense of this general affection, I should purchase the liberty of hating a few. In short, no one wishes to be relieved from these laws, except the very man for whose restraint they were framed. Let a man obey these precepts, and then he will know whether they be of God. According to that divine saying of our Lord, "if any man will do his will, he will know of the doctrine whether it be of God." A sincere mind, and a heart willing to assent to moral truth, and to comply with moral duty, are the best interpreters of scripture. One, who is possessed of these, will seldom find himself puzzled by any expressions of our Saviour, while one who yields a cavilling dissent, and a reluctant obedience, will be continually embarrassed by the plainest texts, and the reason is evident. Our Lord did not study to anticipate all the objections, or to obviate all the prevaricating cavils, which a perverse or sinful mind might possibly suggest: as this would have been a vain attempt, so would it have been unworthy the dignity of a divine teacher. If men wished to be deceived, it was not possible for him to undeceive them, or to preserve them from delusion. It

was not his office to prosecute them to conviction at the bar of eternal justice ; but to exhort them to avoid condemnation by a timely amendment. “Do not think,” says he, “that I will accuse you to the Father.” “He came not to condemn the world”—his object was to speak to the conviction of the sinner. If they understand him, it is of little consequence whether sophists can discover, in our Saviour’s words, the means of self-delusion.

There is another point of view in which the equity of this celebrated maxim appears conspicuously :—if we adhere to it we must always proportion our expectations from others to our own regard to virtue. We must either be severe to ourselves or indulgent to others : we cannot expect a high degree of virtue from them except we display it in ourselves. We must either be kind, tender-hearted and forgiving to others, or excuse others for being, morose, cruel, and unrelenting to us. But it does not allow us to return evil for evil, or act as ill to others as they have done to us ; because we can never wish, that they should treat us in the same manner.

On the whole, if we apply this reasoning to our civil commissions—introduce it into the circle of our domestic relations—apply it to the operations of war, or the intercourse of peace, we shall perceive, how completely a mutual attention to it would harmonize this jarring world.

ERASMUS.

---

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.]

SIR,—Your correspondent, “A CANDID INQUIRER,” has requested me to solve some difficulties that have occurred to him in explaining the language of Scripture—I am very ready to lend him the best assistance in my power. I consider it incumbent on every one that feels himself in possession of the true meaning of any passage in the sacred volume, to make that interpretation known to any that may require it. I do not enter into your suspicion, as to the sincerity of your correspondent. It is true, that an objection may be so put forward as to evince a spirit and feeling on the part of

the writer, which no reasoning is likely to overcome; and as, in such case, the end of answering is frustrated, it is better to be silent. I trust, however, that your correspondent wishes to be informed, and if so, I hope to satisfy him, with respect to all his inquiries.

His first inquiry is, "Why do Unitarians give the title *our Saviour*, to Jesus Christ.?" I answer—because his name is JESUS, which is "Saviour," as he will find from Matt. i. 21. "And thou shalt call his name, JESUS, [Saviour,] for he shall save his people from their sins." Here, we have not only authority for the name, but the reason given why it should be applied in a peculiar manner to the Christ. Because, Peter declares, in Acts, v. 31, "Him, [Jesus, whom they slew and hanged upon a tree] hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." On this text I may remark, that if, as you suspect, (I know not with what reason,) A CANDID INQUIRER, be only "a cavilling opponent" who would maintain the opposite doctrine; I trust he may be induced to meditate upon this clear and important passage; and see how irreconcilable it is with the Trinitarian creed. If the person whom God hath enabled to be a Saviour be the great God himself—then it must be true that the Jews slew the great God himself, and hanged him upon a tree: for whoever was the person slain and hanged upon a tree, the same was exalted to be a prince and a Saviour. Again, because Paul, in Acts, xiii. 23, says—"Of this man's [David's] seed, hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a *Saviour*, Jesus." Because in Luke ii. 11, it is said, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a *Saviour* which is Christ the Lord;" Because in John iv. 42, the Samaritans (who had at first believed on Jesus, "for the saying of the woman which testified.—He told me all that ever I did") said unto the woman. "Now we believe not because of thy saying, but for that we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed, the Christ, the *Saviour* of the world," which words were used in the presence of Christ, and thus received his sanction. And because John in his first Epistle, iv. 14, says, "And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the *Saviour* of the world."

This is sufficient authority for the application of the term to Christ, but the drift of his objection is this.—Is not the application of the word “Saviour” to any one but God, at variance with Isaiah<sup>xliiii.</sup> 11. “I am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.” If your correspondent feel any difficulty here, I am afraid he is not well acquainted with the style and manner of the sacred volume. The prophet is not speaking with reference to the possibility of any person, being in some future time, sent by the Almighty with power to be the Saviour of his people; but with reference to their former redemption from the bondage of Egypt, and their approaching deliverance from the captivity. He is contrasting the true God with the false gods, and he represents the Lord God as saying, “I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour, [i. e. no one able to deliver or to save you.] I have declared, I *have saved*, I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore, ye are my witnesses saith the Lord, that I am God.” How were they witnesses? because at the time of their deliverance from Egypt, they had no strange god to trust in—they placed their belief and trust in the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob—and He delivered them—and thus their own experience bore testimony to the saving power of that God in whom they trusted then, and that none of those strange gods, [or idols] in whom they were afterwards so much inclined to trust, had any concern in their deliverance; so that in reality, they had no Saviour, but the Lord their God. This was the great truth that the prophets were continually laying before the people in order to preserve them from idolatry—viz. that it was the Lord their God alone, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, led them through the wilderness, conquered for them in the land of Canaan, and settled them prosperously in the land flowing with milk and honey,—and that those false Gods, into whose service they were so often seduced, had never delivered them; but that on the contrary, they had no Saviour, except the Lord their God. The use of this language, then, by the prophet, was no bar to the application of the term Saviour, to any person whom God might send to deliver them from any temporal calamity: much less, should it prevent our acknowledgement of that salvation which



we owe to him, who was the "desire of all nations," as the mediator of that Redemption, which we owe to the infinite mercy of our God. We acknowledge equally with the Jews, that there is no Saviour but God—that there is no one able to deliver from any thing *but by the will of God* : and that if God had not given his Son authority for the great work, our salvation could never have been accomplished. It seems almost unnecessary, to go into any proof, that this declaration in Isaiah, was not designed to prohibit the use of the word Saviour, as applied to any of the instruments of their deliverance, provided the supremacy of God was admitted. But there is a passage of Nehemiah, so satisfactory, that I would refer your correspondent to it—Neh. ix. 27, "and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them *Saviours* who saved them out of the hand of their enemies." Here is not only the plural of the word used: but Nehemiah declares, that the Judges were Saviours in that very case in which God declared that he was their only Saviour.

His second inquiry is, "Did Christ take away sin, and how did he take it away?"

I answer, that Christ did remove sin to a vast extent, but he certainly did not remove all the sin that was at that time in the world—much less did he prevent the existence of sin at a future period. I use the word prevent, rather than remove, for it is obvious that he could not remove what was not at the time in existence. He did not render impossible a liability to sin, because he would thus have totally subverted that probationary discipline, and moral government under which we are placed. We say, that he did take away sin, because we are assured, 1 John, iii. 5, that he was manifested to take away our sins, and we believe that the purpose for which he was manifested, was actually accomplished.

But how did he take away sin? I am afraid that I cannot enumerate all the ways in which this most desirable end was accomplished—but I will name some without regard to systematic arrangement. He took away sin, by granting to all those who, on seeing his miracles, and hearing his gracious words, believed on him, free pardon and remission of all the sins of their past lives. This power of granting remission of past sins, he had received from his Father. It was

an extraordinary power, given to an extraordinary person, as a reward, and for the purpose of at once establishing a beginning of his spiritual kingdom. He was thus able to introduce into his kingdom, newly created men—created in righteousness—created unto good works—created anew in the whole frame and temper of their minds.

Christ further took away sin, by purifying unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He was personally taking away sin, in every one that he induced by his teaching and example to forsake a sinful course. He *is* still taking it away by the influence of his gospel, in opening the eyes of sinners on the evil of their ways—in impressing the heart with love for the beauty of holiness—in stimulating the zeal of men, for the attainment of everlasting joy. In this way, every sentence in his sermon on the mount—every parable that he spoke—every kindly act he ever did—all have been from his own time, taking away some or other sin, and inducing some to live virtuously and piously, that would have never done so before.

I must quote your correspondent's words in order to lay before your readers his last inquiry. "The Rev. Mr. Montgomery, when proposing the third overture to the Remonstrant Synod lately held at Larne, is reported to have said the malicious calumny that the Remonstrants deny the Lord that bought them, has resounded from one end of the Island to the other." The denial of the Lord that bought them being a *malicious calumny*, I am led to infer that they do believe, that the Lord Jesus Christ did buy them, and my inquiries are, how did he buy them? what was the price he paid? to whom was it paid? and whence the necessity of the purchase?

I suppose your correspondent to be aware that the phrase alluded to occurs in Scripture (2 Pet. ii. 1.) "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, *even denying the Lord that bought them.*" The well-known meaning of those who apply this passage to the Remonstrants, is, that by renouncing the doctrine of Vicarious Satisfaction, they deny the Lord that *bought* them. Now that I may not spin out this letter to too great a length, I will content

myself with quoting three writers in explanation and illustration of the language used by Peter in this verse. Macknight on the passage in his Commentary on the Epistles, Schleusner's Lexicon, and Taylor's Key to the Romans.

Dr. Macknight has the following note upon the passage:

"(Denying the Lord who bought them.) Because the Lord is said to have *bought* the persons who denied him, *buying* cannot mean the buying these persons from eternal punishment, but must be taken in the sense in which God is said to have bought the Israelites to be his subjects and people, namely, by working miracles for their deliverance out of Egypt, and their introduction into Canaan. Ex. xv. 16. Deut. xxxii. 6. In this sense either God or Christ might be called, the Lord who bought the false teachers.—It is generally agreed that by the Lord's *buying* the heretical teachers nothing more is meant but his making them his professing people by the preaching of the Gospel, and that their denying the Lord who bought them, consisted in their refusing to obey the precepts of the Gospel, perhaps also in their worshipping idols in order to escape persecution."

Schleusner in his remarks upon the Greek word for buying, says,

"Hence in the New Testament this word is frequently applied to Christ, so far as by his life, teaching, and death, he freed men from the power and dominion of vice, asserted their true liberty as human beings, and thus made them *his own*;" and he explains, Rev. v. 9. "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood," to mean—"By thy death thou hast rendered us true worshippers of God—hast delivered us from the slavery and the punishment of sin."

Dr. Taylor in his useful work on the Romans, p. 9. has the following valuable note on such expressions as "Is he not thy Father that has BOUGHT thee?" "Remember thy congregations which thou hast purchased of old."

"In order to understand the notion of buying and purchasing as here applied, let it be observed that BUYING is often used metaphorically in Scripture, where it is common to meet with buying without money and without price, or buying with a price, improperly so called. Is. lv. 1. 'Ho! every one that thirsteth, [that is

desirous of life and salvation,] come ye to the waters and he that hath no money, come ye; buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk, *without money and without price:* which is explained in v. 3. 'Incline your ear and come to me, hear [be attentive to my instructions] and your souls shall live.' In this sense we buy when we seriously apply our minds to study, and receive the precepts of DIVINE WISDOM, and the promises of Divine Grace; and endeavour to have our hearts and lives conformed to them. Thus we *buy* the truth, Prov. xxiii. 23. iv. 5. 7. 'Get [buy] wisdom, get [buy] understanding;' so Chap. xv. 32. xvi. 16, &c. In all these places the word we render *get*, might have been translated *buy*, and so it is rendered in Dent. xxviii. 68. and several other places. Thus we buy of Christ gold tried in the fire and white raiment (Rev. iii. 18.) *viz.* the most valuable endowments of mind. Thus the wise merchantman (Matt. xiii. 45. 46.) having found the pearl of great price, [the virtue and happiness of the Gospel,] went and sold all that he had and *bought* it: that is, straightway in his heart he renounced all temporal enjoyments, that he might dispose himself for Eternal Life. And in this sense we *sell*, when through carelessness we fall into a course of sin, or through obstinacy continue in it. Thus we may *sell* the truth instead of *buying* it. Prov. xxiii. 23. Thus Ahab did sell himself to work wickedness. 1 Kings, xxi. 25. And thus the Jew in the flesh was carnal, and *sold* under sin. Rom. vii. 15. Thus we *buy* when we diligently use proper means to gain knowledge and good habits: we *sell* when we neglect them and abandon ourselves to ignorance and vice. And the Most High God is also in Scripture said to *buy* and *sell*, with respect to his creatures. He *buyeth* a people when he interposes in their favour, and employs all proper means to free them from suffering, or any circumstances of wretchedness, and to raise them to a happy and prosperous state. So he purchased or bought the children of Israel by bringing them out of the slavery of Egypt to the liberties and privileges of Canaan, by his mighty power, and wisdom, and goodness; which may be considered as the price, improperly so called, for which he *bought* them. On the other hand he *sells* a people when he withdraws his favour and blessing, suffers their enemies to prevail, or calamity and

ruin to fall upon them. see Deut. xxxii. 30. and Judges ii. 14. And this notion of buying or purchasing is, in the New Testament, very properly applied to our salvation by Jesus Christ, and therefore should be well considered and understood."

If your correspondent be inclined, he can easily and satisfactorily answer his own questions out of the valuable information contained in the preceding remarks. He may learn that it is not necessary to find any person to whom a price was to be paid; but that Christ bought them when he made them his own instead of Satan's subjects—when he endured so much suffering in order to make them his own—when he laid down his life for their sakes, and that the necessity of the purchase was neither more nor less than the necessity of delivering them from the dominion of sin.

I could enlarge on these topics, but do not wish to add to a letter already too long.

I remain, &c.;

CURCELLAEUS.

P. S.—As a correct view of the terms *save, salvation, &c.* is of great importance towards understanding many passages, I propose to send you some considerations on these words for a future number.

---

## ORTHODOXY AND INSPIRATION—"THE GIFT OF TONGUES."

---

AT the time when the Rev. Mr. Irving was employed to open the new May-street Church, the fame of that reverend oration-maker, rested chiefly on his grotesque pulpit vagaries, his impious opinions respecting the humanity of Christ, and his confident announcement of the near approach of the Millenium. The last, indeed, was the great Doric pillar on which his notoriety then rested. His profound and wrapt expositions of "the numerals of Daniel and the visions of the Apocalypse" had produced what newspaper paragraph manufacturers, call "a sensation," among most of the "*elect*," that is persons who take themselves to possess, from all eternity,



a patent for *sinning* without contracting *guilt*; and many besides who could not persuade themselves, that they had any such divine license for transgression, were highly captivated with the doctrine of a speedy restoration of all past happiness. These latter were delighted at the prospect of enjoying all manner of comfort.

But even this subject began to lose its influence. Though the "Reverend expounder of raptures elysian," was able confidently to predict, that we should very soon have "a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." yet, with the corn-laws staring us in the face, his disciples began to distrust his predictions; and some, such as the landlords with their high rents, took the alarm and fled from a prophet who threatened them with a fearful curtailment of their present revenues. The *novelty*, also, of the reverend orator's exhibitions of this kind, having passed away, all his histrionic powers were unequal to the task of drawing full houses. The piece had *run* well; but it could not bear to be constantly repeated. In fact, it became evident, that he must either submit the disgrace and *loss* of playing to empty benches, or take some new plan of *raising the wind*. Between the alternatives, the old stager was not long in choosing his course. The beast with the many heads, on whose back he had expected to ride into Millennial felicity, was entirely abandoned: he desisted from any farther attempts to talk horrible things of Christ's humanity; his arithmetic of prophecy was no longer applied to astonish the world by totting up the "numerals" of him who, without injury, domiciled with the fierce and fiery lions; and, in short, all his old tricks were abandoned, with the exception of his solemn buffonery of manner. "About this time," says *The Edinburgh Review*, a work which we quote with much pleasure, owing to its orthodox character, "two cases of miraculous pretensions happened to have been, most unexpectedly, but most opportunely, submitted to the chance of a credulous or contemptuous public. No hierophants to a party, ever better deserved [than Irving, et hoc genus omne,] a god-send of this description; for none could, more immediately, or more industriously, avail themselves of that mysterious predisposition to superstition, the germ of which, is more or less latent in every human heart." The cases to which reference is here

made, were ; first, that of a Miss Fancourt, who was ill of a spine complaint, and was miraculously cured, *one evening*, in answer to the supplications of a Mr. Greaves ; and secondly, that of a family of the Macdonalds, of Port-Glasgow, who, even including the servant-woman of all works, are stated to have received from the Spirit, a renewal of “ the gift of tongues.” What the Macdonalds and their “ unknown tongues” are now about, or whether Miss Fancourt, has since received any evening cures for her spine, it is now of little moment to enquire. What is most to our purpose to notice is, that Mr. Irving was not slow to try how he could turn to some account these pretended leadings and manifestations of the Spirit ; and, in a short time, he was able to produce such a variety of talkers in unknown dialects, that the fame of Port-Glasgow was quite eclipsed. His “ National Church” has been, latterly, the scene of daily ravings of this kind ; and it is somewhat remarkable, that the supernatural gift has chiefly fallen on ladies. The manner in which the spirit is manifested in the “ National,” is generally this :— After the congregation has been assembled, and the anxious strangers who have come to witness the extraordinary things that have fallen out in these latter days, have waited in silent expectation, for some time, on the inspired ladies (generally a young one) starts up, with a scream ; and continues, at the top of her voice, to utter sounds which are far beyond the power of the uninitiated to comprehend. The performance is tolerably like that of the lady of the Elfin world, who had found her way, rather unluckily, into the society of mortal men ; and of whom the poet, as if he had been describing one of Mr. Irving’s prophetesses says :—

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*

“ The maiden’s tongue, unchained at last,  
 Asserted all its female right,  
 And talked, and talked with all its might.  
 But man nor master could make out  
 What the eloquent maiden talked about ;  
 The things she uttered, like did seem  
 To the bubbling waves of a limpid stream,  
 For the words of her speech, *if words they might be*,  
 Were the words of a speech of a fair committee ;  
 And when she had said them o’er and o’er,  
 Count Otto, understood no more  
 Than you or I of the slang that falls

From Dukes and dupes at Tattersall's,  
Of Hebrew from a bearded Jew,  
Or metaphysics from a Blue."

The only important difference between the two cases is, that Mr. Irving pretends to give translations of the things uttered, "in the speech of a far countrie," by his lady linguists. At first, so "mighty mysterious" were the babblings of these modern personages of "the tongues," that neither themselves nor any one else could know aught of what was said. Even yet, as far as we can learn, the giftees merely profess to speak "as it is given unto them," but declare, that "they know not what they say." Mr. Irving, however, though he does not himself speak other tongues than he formerly did, pretends to be able to explain the language of the Spirit; and, accordingly, he generally follows his prophets and prophetesses with a running translation, which, supposing it to be true to the original, shows the inspirings with which these individuals, are favoured, to be a set of common-place exclamations, very unlike what beings so highly favoured might be expected to utter.

In thus briefly sketching the rise and progress of the modern school of prophets, we feel, that we should be looked upon as impudent tamperers with the credulity of our readers, did we not presume, that most, or all of them, have already learned, from other sources something of the extraordinary, facts, which we have here briefly detailed. To state, that a man, whose name as a christian preacher, once stood pretty high in these countries, should be found playing the part of prime actor in such religious juggleries, that a person assuming to lead others in the way to heaven, should take advantage of the garb of his office to enact such things, before the world, as must, if seriously considered, shock the friends of christianity, and may furnish to the wicked a topic for scoffing and impiety—to state such things, and also to assert, that some score of individuals should be found, either so fanatical or so designing, that they would become the obedient puppets of this modern impostor, would appear so incredible, if resting on any questionable or solitary authority, that we should fear exposing ourselves to contempt, did we not know, that the fame of these impositions has preceded us. Making ourselves easy, therefore, on

this ground, and also deeming it unnecessary farther to proceed in chronicling the doings of the arch-impostor of the "National," together with those of his deluded or despicable train of screaming babblers, we would now proceed to another consideration suggested by the facts which we have above mentioned. The public are readily startled by the extremes to which Mr. Irving has proceeded. Orthodoxy itself turns, with feelings of pious horror, from reflecting on such deplorable fanaticism during impositions; and yet, the whole assumption of the supernatural gift of tongues is nothing more than a legitimate extension of one of the fundamental doctrines of that same orthodoxy. Mr. Irving contends, that a renewal of the miraculous gifts conferred on the day of pentecost, is extended to the members of his church; and he has endeavoured to give the best proofs of the fact. Other Orthodox divines, arrogate to themselves and the true believers, members of their churches, a similar inspiration. They have not, indeed, pretended to the particular class of gifts, which Mr. Irving's followers say they have received. They content themselves with asserting, that the inspiration of the Holy Spirit works in them more quietly, but not less efficaciously. They are inspired,—as they assert—but inspired in a way of their own; and so decided is such inspiration, that many or all of them, pretend to be able to note the day and hour when the Holy Ghost descended on their souls. This is the simple statement of the Orthodox doctrine of regeneration by the spirit. In short, these Orthodox divines claim for themselves and their followers to be just as decidedly the objects of supernatural inspiration as do their more noisy brethren of Mr. Irving's church; but, because the one case is a fearless and candid extension of the doctrine, we spurn it, whilst the other claims are tolerated, because they are less glaringly absurd and impious. To trace the parallel more fully, might, possibly, induce some of our meeker fanatics, to reflect on the nature and character of their lofty pretensions; but, to do this, here, would extend these remarks to an inconvenient length; the subject may, however, readily be taken up in a future number, should the Editor of *The Bible Christian* think the present hasty article fitting to appear in the pages of that publication.

\* \* \*

## MEMOIRS OF REV. PHILIP TAYLOR.

[FROM THE MONTHLY REPOSITORY.]

THE REV. PHILIP TAYLOR, late of Harold's Cross, near Dublin, was born in the parish of St. George Colegate, Norwich, the 11th May, 1747. He was the eldest son of Mr. Richard Taylor, of that city, and grandson of that justly celebrated divine, Dr. John Taylor, whose admirable tract, "On the Value of a Child," was occasioned by his birth.

From his fifth to his seventh year, Mr. Taylor was sent to the school of Isaac Jarmy, clerk of the Society of Friends in Norwich.\* His first classical instructor was his learned grandfather; and in the year 1757, he accompanied him to Warrington, whither the Doctor removed to fill the situation of Theological Professor in the Dissenting Academy then recently established there. For two years after this period, he was under the care of Dr. Edward Harwood, an able classical teacher at Congleton, and author of the "Introduction to the Classics." He then returned to Warrington, and passed a year under his grandfather's roof, going daily to the free school under the Rev. Mr. Owen. In 1760 he became a pupil, with his cousin, Dr. Rigby, afterwards of Norwich, of Dr. Priestly, at Nantwich, whom he accompanied, in the autumn of 1761, to Warrington, in consequence of the sudden death of his grandfather in the month of March of that year, and Dr. Priestly having been appointed Classical Tutor in the Academy. In the beginning of the year 1762, he lost his excellent father; and, in the following autumn, he was removed to the Academat Exeter, under the care of Mr. Micajah Towgood, Messrs. Merivale, Hogg, and Turner. There he remained till 1765, when he again returned to Warrington, and finished his theological course, under that excellent man and accomplished scholar, Dr. John Aikin.

In April, 1766, he preached, for the first time in public, at Blakely, near Manchester. In September, 1767, he was chosen assistant to the Rev. John Brekell,

---

\* The celebrated Dr. Crotch, Musical professor at Oxford, and author of the Oratorio of "Palestine," was born in the house adjoining Mr. Jarmy's.



minister of Kaye Street, in Liverpool, whom he succeeded as pastor of the congregation upon his death, and was ordained thereto, July, 1770, in the presence of eighteen ministers. In the year 1771, he paid his first visit to Dublin, a voyage having been recommended for the recovery of his health, and from this incident arose his introduction into the family of the Rev. Dr. Weld, for whom he preached, and to whose only daughter he was afterwards married in September, 1774; a connexion of unalloyed felicity to both parties. Never was man more highly blessed in a virtuous and sympathising consort. Three years after this period he was invited over to Dublin, as assistant to his father-in-law, Dr. Weld, and co-pastor with his much esteemed friend the Rev. Samuel Thomas, with whom he had previously been acquainted in 1764, when on a visit to Yeovil, where Mr. Thomas was then minister. Dr. Weld was the immediate successor of the learned Dr. Leland, and it is a remarkable fact, that the ministry of Dr. Leland, Dr. Weld, and Mr. Taylor, embraced a period of more than 150 years.

Whilst a student at Exeter, he contracted a warm, and lasting friendship with James White, Esq., afterwards a barrister, with whom he continued to correspond until the death of the latter, in the year 1825, and whose steady attachment, notwithstanding their different professions and pursuits, was a source of high enjoyment to the pure and benevolent mind of our venerable friend. Drs. Enfield and Estlin, too, may be mentioned as kindred minds, whose correspondence often delighted him.

Mr. Taylor was eminently fitted to give and to receive enjoyment from society. His cheerful temper, his frank and cordial manners, his animated conversation, enlivened with humour and enriched with anecdote, rendered him a delightful and desired companion. But he never forgot, nor could any of his friends or associates be betrayed into forgetting, the respect due to the character of a Christian minister. No one ever felt under improper restraint in his presence; on the contrary, he was the promoter of innocent cheerfulness upon all occasions; yet he was the last man with whom a scoffer or a libertine would have ventured to take a freedom. His musical acquirements contributed their aid to the charm

of his society. Nature had gifted him with a voice of great power and excellent quality, and he had cultivated both vocal and instrumental music with considerable success. His taste was remarkably pure, and some of his Psalm-tunes may be reckoned among the most perfect specimens of that description of composition. He was for many years a member of one of the musical societies of Dublin, then adorned by the talents of Stevenson, Spray, Smith, and T. Cooke. His brethren in the ministry were particularly attached to him, and always delighted in his cheerful and entertaining society. With these distinguished social habits, however, he neglected not the domestic duties. His *home* to him was always the centre of happiness, and from him that happiness was diffused to the humblest being within the reach of his influence. He was dearly loved by every inmate of his house. In his garden he took great delight, and few could excel him in horticulture. Many an affectionate friend will remember the order which pervaded it, and the luxuriance of its productions: but when in the evening seated in the midst of his happy circle, he delighted all hearts with the beauty of his reading, and the excellence of his selections—it was in these hours he might be said to present a perfect pattern of benign enjoyment and domestic felicity. In all arrangements of life, he was remarkably exact, and his pecuniary engagements were fulfilled with scrupulous punctuality. To his friends and connexions he was ever hospitable, and to his neighbours generous and kind. He took with him to the grave the blessings of the poor, and as he never made an enemy while he lived, so his memory is sacred in the hearts of all who ever knew him. As a husband, a father, and a friend, he stood pre-eminent, and as a bright pattern of Christian excellence, he presented a model which well and fitly illustrated the doctrines he impressed upon others. He possessed in a remarkable degree, attachment to all the members of his family, and also to his native city; and though early separated from his paternal roof, neither time nor distance had the power to weaken those bonds of affection which united him to them. Of his numerous relations, there was not one in whose welfare he did not take the interest of a father or a brother, and during his long life this delightful union of hearts was never, in a single

instance, broken or impaired. He was accustomed, about every seventh year, to visit Norfolk, there to assemble his relations around him: and never were the interchanges of family affection more sincerely and conspicuously manifested. His feelings on one of these delightful occasions are thus described in a letter to his colleague, the Rev. Joseph Hutton, in the summer of 1796: "I cannot," he says, "express how much I am affected by the kind and unremitting attentions of all my dear relatives to fill up every hour in rational enjoyment which sleep does not occupy. We are at my brother John's, where we are enjoying the constant feast of *his* company and conversation, to which few women could add so much as the very uncommon and elevated character with which it has been his merited good fortune to become united. This is to be our grand week of family union. Our meeting will be large, and promises as much happiness as can reasonably be hoped for. Yet tell the worthy members of our flock," he adds, "that their absent pastor, even amidst these scenes of abundant domestic gratification, is never forgetful of them, or indifferent to their interests. I rejoice to hear of their general welfare. I beg you will present my affectionate regards to all, as you shall happen to see them, and express the pleasure I have in the hope of returning to them with better health, and capacity to serve them as I could wish." Dated Norwich, July 19, 1796.

Mr. Taylor was a Nonconformist of the old school: steady, conscientious, unflinching, in his attachment to the principles of civil and religious liberty, through a period and in a country in which such a consistent profession was not easy. His earliest religious and political impressions were formed at a time when the attempt of the Pretender to regain the crown of his ancestors was a comparatively recent event; and when, among the Dissenters in particular, popery and slavery were terms seldom disunited. Among his first associates in the ministry were those who had been actively engaged in opposing that puny bantling of legitimacy in his march to Derby; and his future residence in Ireland was not likely to induce a forgetfulness of the evils and errors of popery. Hence *prejudice* might have led him, as it did many of his less consistent Dissenting brethren both in Ireland and England, to question the propriety

of granting to the Catholics a full enjoyment of their civil rights ; but he was governed not by prejudice, but *principle*, and therefore he was a decided advocate of Catholic emancipation. Firm and unbending, however, in attachment to the principles of nonconformity, he numbered among his friends men of all religious persuasions. Among these were Dr. Law, the late Bishop of Elphin ; and Dr. Brinkley, the present Bishop of Cloyne. With the former of these learned and accomplished dignitaries of the established religion, who never made any secret of his Unitarian convictions, he lived on terms of cordial amity.

Mr. Taylor's pulpit exercises were distinguished by a correct style and chaste elocution. His appearance and delivery were so earnest and dignified that no one could listen to his discourses without advantage. His devotional services were always simple, pure, and impressive ; it was in this delightful part of the public worship of the sabbath, that he peculiarly excelled ; and flowing, as his prayers did, from a truly pious heart, they seldom failed to engage the responsive Amen of every hearer.

On the 8th of October 1820, after a happy union of forty-six years, Mr. Taylor was deprived by death of the faithful friend and partner of his life. Possessed as she was of a mind highly cultivated, of manners the most refined and amiable and piety as warm as it was sincere and deeply rooted, no wife or parent, no friend or loved companion, was ever consigned to the grave amidst more lively or general regret. She possessed a heart which overflowed with charity and benevolence. It was impossible to know her without loving and respecting her pure character, and in every relation of life she shone bright and conspicuous to the last.

We now come to the concluding events of Mr. Taylor's life. On the 29th of April, 1827, when he had been sixty years an officiating minister, the last fifty of which he presided over the congregation in Eustace-street, Dublin, his increasing infirmities suggested to him the prudence of retiring from the pastoral office. In the letter which announced his determination, he says, " While still allowed to retain some little power of body and mind, I trust that I shall conclude my public labours *now* with a better grace, than if compelled to abandon them by a sudden and total incapacity."

After gratefully acknowledging the kind indulgence and affectionate regards of his flock, during nearly fifty years of his ministry, he concludes in this beautiful and impressive language: "It is my fervent hope and prayer to the Fountain of all Wisdom, that He may preside over your deliberations on this important business, and direct you to the choice of a successor to myself, who is rich in spiritual gifts and graces, and abounding in all those amiable qualities of the heart which can make him to *you* a useful and acceptable minister, and to my ever and highly esteemed friend and colleague, a welcome and affectionate associate." Notwithstanding this letter he continued to officiate until the appointment of his successor, the Rev. James Martineau, in whose ordination he bore a part, on the 26th of October, 1828; on the last day of which month he was presented by his affectionate flock with a most gratifying mark of their esteem and love.

He continued for nearly three years after this period in the enjoyment of comparative health, and an almost enviable cheerfulness of mind and spirit; and at length, by a gradual and almost imperceptible decline, sank to rest in Jesus. "My spirit" (he beautifully says, in that instrument which, as it were, closed his earthly career) "I resign into the hands of that gracious God who gave me being, and hath crowned a long life with innumerable mercies; humbly hoping that, through his continued goodness, my soul may be redeemed from the power of the grave to the possession of complete and enduring happiness in a better world to come."

Who then shall say, after contemplating the beautiful life and peaceful death of our venerable friend, that the Unitarian faith is incapable of sustaining the mind and supporting the spirit in such a gloomy hour? Verily his was the faith which triumphs over death, which enables the believer to say with the Apostle, "O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory? Blessed be God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."



## MEMOIR OF THE REV. JAMES MANNING.

(*From the Funeral Sermon preached by the REV. H. ACTON.*)

---

“THE late Rev. JAMES MANNING was born at Northampton, on the 25th of August, in the year 1754. He was the son of a respectable gentleman of that place, whose family had been for many generations settled in the neighbourhood. It is a singular circumstance, that though he was so remarkable for the strength and excellence of his physical constitution, he was the only one, out of a family of eight, that could be reared beyond the period of childhood. ‘To save my life,’ (these are his own words,) ‘I was placed with a tenant of my father’s in the country, and nourished by their simple and wholesome fare; this laid the foundation of so sound a constitution, that at seventy-five I cannot remember my ever having been confined to my bed by illness.’ His parents were members of the flock of the celebrated Dr. Doddridge, who at that time was the minister of a congregation, and the head of a Dissenting Academy, at Northampton; and it is highly probable that, either directly or through his parents, our lamented friend received some of his best early impressions from that pious and excellent Divine. He received the first rudiments of his education, under the Rev. Mr. Ryland, a Baptist minister, and father of the late well-known Dr. Ryland of Bristol. On the removal of this gentleman from Northampton, he was placed successively under the care of the Rev. Mr. Gilbert, and the Rev. Mr. Hextal. In 1768, six years after the death of his father, and when Mr. Manning himself was fourteen years of age, his excellent mother was married again to the Rev. Samuel Merivale, then the Divinity Tutor of a Dissenting Academy in Exeter, and minister of a small congregation, at Thorverton. This was the occasion of his coming into Devonshire, and in all probability, of his subsequent destination to the christian ministry. After spending about two years in a school kept by the Rev. Mr. Kiddell, at Tiverton, our friend was entered as a divinity student in the Academy in this city, having for his Tutors, his step-father, Mr. Merivale, Mr. Micajah Towgood, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Turner, and subse-

quently, Mr. Thomas Jervis. In some memoirs of his life which he has left, your deceased pastor speaks, with becoming gratitude, of the benefits he then derived from the manner in which he and his fellow-students were encouraged by the venerable Micajah Towgood, to exercise their own judgments on the sense of the holy scriptures. ‘Our Tutor,’ he says, ‘gave us a candid view of the arguments on both sides of a controversy. The students were then left to the exercise of their own judgment, and directed to the means of further inquiry. He warmly recommended candour and continued diligence, in the search after truth, and modesty in forming their last judgment on points about which wise and good men have thought differently.’ Sound and judicious advice! Such Tutors make able and liberal-minded ministers of the gospel. After our friend had been about three or four years in the Exeter Academy, that institution was finally closed; and he removed to the Academy at Hoxton, near London, of which the Tutors were at that time, Dr. Savage, Dr. Andrew Kippis, and the late Dr. Abraham Rees, editor of the Cyclopædia. In this institution he had for his associates many young men, who afterwards became eminent in their different walks of life; and among them the celebrated living writer, Mr. Godwin, who he says was at that time a rigid Calvinist, and of whom he was accustomed to relate some interesting anecdotes.”

“In 1775, Mr. Manning finally quitted the Academy, taking with him a most honourable testimony to his character and proficiency, signed by all his Tutors. He was immediately engaged to succeed his step-father, Mr. Merivale, then deceased, as the minister of the congregation, at Thorverton. Early in the very next year, however, he was invited by the united congregations assembling in this place, to be an assistant preacher to the cousins, Mr. Stephen, and Mr. Micajah Towgood. The former of these gentlemen died in the latter end of the year 1777, when Mr. Manning was invited to become co-pastor with the survivor; and thus began that happy connection between him and this society of christian worshippers, which lasted in uninterrupted harmony for more than half a century, till one generation had passed away and another had succeeded, and his venerable form seemed to be almost identified

with the place, in which you and your fathers have offered up your devotions to Almighty God. The formal ordination of Mr. Manning as a pastor of this christian church, took place in the next year, 1778, when there were twenty-six ministers present, and the various parts of the service were conducted by Mr. Micajah Towgood, Mr. Tozer, Dr. Harris, of London, and Sir Harry Trelawny, Baronet of Trelawny in Cornwall. The only one of these ministers that survives, is the worthy and venerable, though somewhat eccentric Baronet. He appears, from their correspondence, to have been on terms of the most tender and respectful friendship with Mr. Manning. He afterwards took orders in the episcopal Establishment of this country, and is now, I believe, living at Rome, having been many years a professed member of the Catholic church. There is something interesting in the contrast afforded by the history of these two friends of fifty years since. The one has held on the even tenor of his course, during the whole of that period, maintaining the same principles, and ministering the word of truth to the same congregation of people. The other has passed from the society of Arian dissenters, to be first a clergyman of the English Establishment, and lastly to acknowledge the time-rooted authority of the Romish Hierarchy. Yet, as I presume they were both equally honest and sincere in their motives, I rejoice much in the hope which the gospel of Christ permits us to cherish, that they will meet again in that future state, where all distinctions of sect and party will be unknown, and all the obedient followers of Jesus shall dwell together in everlasting happiness."

"Besides Mr. Micajah Towgood, Mr. Manning had many colleagues in this place, the Rev. A. Tozer, the Rev. J. Bretland, and the late Rev. Timothy Kenrick, a man of strong intellectual powers, and of pure, unbending integrity, whose name will long be respected. Since the death of the latter gentleman, our lamented friend has been associated in this ministry with the Rev. Dr. Carpenter, now of Bristol, the Rev. William Hincks, of Manchester College, York, and the humble individual who pays this feeble, but sincere and respectful tribute to his memory."

“ I have now, my brethren, concluded all that I have to say on the principal events in the life of your late revered pastor; for it would be irrelevant to enter into any particulars, even of a public nature, not at all connected with his course as the christian minister of this congregation. I crave your indulgence for a few words more, respecting his opinions and character. This is a subject that I should fear to approach, even in the slight manner which I intend to do, if I were not relieved by the conviction, that the long and intimate knowledge which you have had of him, will enable you easily to correct whatever is erroneous, and supply whatever is deficient, in my poor delineation of him. He was certainly favoured by nature. His bodily and mental constitution may be truly said to have been ‘ cast in the happiest mould.’ His almost uninterrupted health, strength, and activity of body, must have contributed much to support that uniform cheerfulness of mind, and alacrity of spirit, by which he was distinguished. One may say this the more confidently, inasmuch as he himself never hesitated to acknowledge it in expressions of devout gratitude to providence. But we must not suppose, that such a temper as his could be entirely the result of physical causes. I am far from meaning to intimate such a thought. Undoubtedly the many amiable qualities which appeared so conspicuous in his character, grew out of his heart-felt piety and benevolence, his sincere love of God and love of men, the principles of justice, charity, and brotherly kindness, which he had drawn from the religion of which he was the minister, and cultivated throughout his life from truly christian motives. The qualities particularly alluded to, those of affability and kindness, were not merely taken up by him for occasional exhibition, but marked his general conduct in all the relations of his life, domestic, friendly and pastoral. I beg to be allowed the pleasure of offering, in this place, my acknowledgement of the perfect liberality and brotherly kindness, which I received from him, from the first moment to the last of our connection as your ministers. If any one word were to be chosen, as the epithet most descriptive of his character, I would say it should be the word *amiable*. He was in the truest and best sense, an amiable man,—a man you could love, for the goodness of his heart and

the purity and benevolence of his conduct. He was one whom all that knew him were ever happy to see; because it was morally certain that he came to you for no selfish purpose, but with friendship in his heart, and cheerfulness in his countenance. The poor and destitute of this city and neighbourhood, of every class, will long remember him; not only for the generous devotion of his time and means to many institutions of great public benefit, but also for his numerous acts of private, yea, secret charity."

Mr. Manning's religious principles must be well known, from his public profession and support of them for so long a period. In his views of ecclesiastical policy, he was a firm and consistent Protestant Dissenter. In his views of christian doctrine, he was an Arian, or what is sometimes called a low Arian, believing in the pre-existent dignity of our Saviour, but not in his proper Deity, and confining worship exclusively to the God<sup>2</sup> and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it should be recorded to his honour, that though he must have known well, of late years, that a great majority of his usual hearers differed from him, on the subject of the pre-existence of Christ, yet he never made any secret of his own views; but openly delivered them from the pulpit, not often, indeed, nor in the spirit of controversy, but in the spirit of a faithful minister of the gospel, resolved to bear his testimony to what he believed to be the truth. His general strain of preaching was practical, devout, and affectionate; plain but animated; and abounding in those broad views of christian truth and duty, which are adapted to have the most powerful influence on our moral dispositions and conduct. His exercises in prayer were fraught with a peculiar spirit of fervent and rational piety. I doubt not, there are very many in this place, who to the last day of their existence will feel cause to be grateful for the spiritual benefits they have derived from his ministration of the word of God."

"For more than a year past, it has been evident to most observers, that the health and strength of our lamented friend were on the decline; though few expected, until very recently, that his useful course would so soon be finished. It will be in your recollection, I am sure, that he preached and administered the Lord's Supper,



in this place, so lately as the first Sunday in the last month; and even for two Sundays after that, he was able to appear here as a worshipper, though not to officiate. After less than a week's entire confinement to his bed, his death was calm, peaceful and happy. It realized the views of death he had himself expressed, after many years experience, 'that when death is not hurried on by accident or excess, it is merely the repose of wearied nature.' 'The religious principles,' he said, 'which I have inculcated on others, have afforded to myself consolation during a large portion of my life; they have rendered advanced years placid, and enabled me to contemplate death without terror.' Summoning his family and domestics around him, he uttered a blessing for them all, within a few minutes of his death, and then gently breathing out his spirit, fell asleep in Jesus. 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.'

"May his surviving relatives be cheered by the signs of general esteem which attend his death, and by the blessed hopes of the gospel. May his name long be remembered in this congregation for good, that his instructions may be followed, and his example imitated. May we all, my brethren, prepare ourselves to meet him again in heaven, in the presence of God and of our Saviour, and in the society of the spirits of just men made perfect. Amen."

---

### LINES ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. JAMES MANNING.

---

SERVANT of God! farewell!  
 I know that solemn sound—  
     Thy race is run,  
     Thy work is done;  
 I hear thy passing bell,  
 Amidst these earthly scenes no more thou shalt be found.

Servant of God!—well done!  
 For thou the race hast won—  
 Long didst thou tread the pleasant ways  
 Of wisdom, midst the tangled maze  
     Of earth-born sin and care:  
 Long didst thou teach the list'ning throng  
 With winning words and reason strong,  
     To shun the fatal snare;  
 But still thy bright example clearest showed  
 How man must live, if he would live to God.

What scene of human woe  
 But did thy footsteps know ?  
 Where reason's ray divine was quenched in night,  
 And fancy's spectre gleamed with lurid light,  
 Thy voice was there,  
 The wretch to cheer,  
 And gild the moment with hope's visions bright;—  
 Or if that might not be,  
 And the mind's wreck too sure was wrought,  
 Still was thy philanthropic thought  
 Awake to charity;  
 Careful each want should be supplied,  
 Each pain assuaged, each tear be dried.

Thy voice was welcome there,  
 In the house of charity and woe,  
 Where human skill with fell disease  
 Wages unequal war.  
 From many a wan and hectic cheek  
 The living light of joy would break,  
 And many a grateful eye pursue  
 Where thy receding form withdrew;  
 For still thy words conveyed a tone  
 To sorrow's bleeding heart well known—  
 They told of sympathy—  
 That hope of health might still remain,  
 That patience yet might lighten pain;  
 They told of rest on high.

Nor didst thou grudge the useful hours  
 Of condescending care,  
 When charity with her warm hand  
 Doth daily lead her youthful band  
 To springs of knowledge fair;  
 Ah, charity! where wilt thou find,  
 To instruct thy little ones again,  
 A friend so wise and kind.

Shall we forget the sacred glow,  
 That o'er thy voice and visage stole,  
 When holiest duties bent thy brow,  
 And lent their fervor to thy soul?  
 Such faithful words we heard in vain  
 Might wander far nor hear again.

And long shall memory recall  
 The sweet and solemn hours,  
 What holy texts thy lips did grace,  
 As from thy hands the tokens passed  
 Of that love-feast, the best, the last  
 Of him, our self-devoted Lord  
 And followers, round the paschal board;  
 Tokens of heavenly love and peace,  
 And Satan's vanquished powers.

Such as thou wert may many rise  
 To plead the message of the skies;  
 With us abide thy memory,  
 Like the voice speaking from on high,  
 That where thou art we once may be,  
 And having loved may follow thee.

## SUNDAY-SCHOOL READINGS. ' 1

## NO. III.

Cork, Oct. 25th, 1831.

Verse 16—"FOR GOD MADE TWO GREAT LIGHTS; THE GREATER LIGHT TO RULE THE DAY, AND THE SMALLER LIGHT TO RULE THE NIGHT: HE MADE THE STARS ALSO."

These lights are described as they appear to us: several of the fixed stars are probably larger than the sun; and the moon, except from its nearness to us, is one of the smallest lights in the firmament; but remember that there is not any comparison of planetary dimensions set up in this relation; the statement is simply, that the sun and moon are great lights, which is unquestionably true.

"TO RULE THE DAY;" rule here means to *guide*, or *preside*. In Hebrews xiii. 7. we have the following words:—"Remember them which have the rule over you;" the rule here spoken would be better translated "presidence," and again in the same chapter, verse 17—"Obey them that have the rule over you;" the guidance or presidence. Archbishop Newcome says that "*leaders*," is a proper reading of this word. You see here how Genesis may be made to illustrate certain passages of the New Testament, and whether this reading be adopted or not, you can show examples of a sense for the word "rule," different from the spiritual tyranny which ambitious ecclesiastics would have it necessarily and peremptorily imply. Our Saviour's opinion of Christian authority may perhaps be a useful comment on this passage, see Mark, chap x. 42—"Ye know that they which are accounted to *rule* over the Gentiles, exercise *Lordship* over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister, (or shall minister to you,) and whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be the servant of all." We see here a proof beyond a doubt of what the gospel sense of "*rule*" is; that it corresponds with guidance, enlightenment, and leading; and has no connexion with the lordly tyranny of Gentile authority.

Verse 20—"AND GOD SAID LET THE WATERS SWARM WITH THE MOVING CREATURE THAT HATH LIFE, AND LET FLYING CREATURES FLY ABOVE THE EARTH UNDER THE FIRMAMENT OF THE HEAVENS: AND IT WAS SO."

We found the lowest and simplest orders of plants created first in the vegetable creation; so in the animal creation the simplest sentient beings are first formed. The humbler classes of plants are most tenacious of life, and so it is among animals, the lower tribes are gifted with powers of existence far beyond those of more energetic life. Thus God compensates life to a certain extent, even in the deprivations which his laws impose. Mosses and Lichens can be shut up in books or kept dry in cabinets for years, yet their existence is only suspended, and if placed in proper circumstances they flourish as freely as ever they did. In the same way a snail which has remained on a wall for years in a cellar, if removed to a garden under moisture and warmth his humble powers of life are found uninjured. Life, diffused through every part of a creature, is feeble but tenacious: life concentrated in the head and heart is energetic, but liable to speedy extinction; and herein consists the chief difference between the lower and higher classes of animals. "*Swarming with living creatures*" includes a large range of existences. Fish are entitled to be herein included, the multitudes of their spawn may be said to swarm. Any one who has observed eel spawn travelling the sides of our rivers in the spring, in streams of a foot or two wide, and considerable depth, will see the propriety of the expression. Of salt-water fish we are told that the production is almost innumerable, and this we can readily admit from having observed the mass of eggs which the roe or pea of a cod-fish or herring presents to view. The production of herrings is sometimes so wonderful that shoals of them encumber and obstruct the bays on the coasts; and sprats are often used in Scotland to manure the ground, these may be admitted to be creatures which swarm in the seas. "FLYING CREATURES," aquatic and other birds; we perceive plants and vegetable matter fit for giving food to fishes and crawling things, were formed for the sustenance of those creatures, who in their turn, precede, as food to Birds of various kinds. Remark here, that

the common version of the Bible says, "the waters brought forth the fowls;" Mr. Wellbeloved says, that this is an incorrect translation, and that the true sense is given by him, "Let flying creatures fly above the earth, &c."

Verse 21—FOR GOD CREATED GREAT SEA ANIMALS, AND ALL THE MOVING CREATURES WITH WHICH THE WATERS SWARMED, ACCORDING TO THEIR KINDS, AND EVERY FLYING CREATURE ACCORDING TO ITS KIND: AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD."

"Great sea animals," all the animals allied to whales: although the object of Scripture is not to teach natural history, yet the most natural and true distinction of creatures has been as yet followed. Whales are not proper fishes, although their habitation is the sea; neither are they crawling creatures. Fishes and reptiles have pale blood, and in consequence of the nature of their circulation, its temperature does not rise much above the average temperature of the sea; they are accordingly called cold-blooded animals. The aquatic animals, on the contrary, which we have here alluded to, have red warm blood, their flesh is of a florid colour, and the fat more or less yellow. Many other marks of distinction could be given, but there is one which must not be omitted, they are called the "Aquatic Mammalia," because their young are born alive, not from eggs, and the female parent suckles them. We sometimes have a Grampus taken in our harbours, and it will be well worth your while to examine the nest; you will find it has a shining oily skin, different from the mucous or scaly covering of reptiles or fish. Its flesh will be found to resemble beef, and its bony structure is much like that of a quadruped. Some of the Aquatic Mammalia, as the Seal, have hair on their bodies; this is valuable for making fur caps, &c.; no true fish has hair on any part of its body. As to the remaining distinguishing characters between Aquatic Mammalia and Fish, which are drawn from the nature of their bones, the form and action of their jaws, their stomachs, &c., &c., it would occupy too much of our present space and time, but the study of the subject would be worthy your serious attention. "MOVING CREATURES," equally those that crawl and swim as fish do: warm-blooded animals move in a great part by the action of their limbs, even those which inhabit the sea; the swimming of fishes, on



the contrary, partakes something of crawling in water, by wriggling the whole body. "ACCORDING TO ITS KIND." We find that every creature was perfected at its creation, and we cannot trace any improvement or deterioration in the animal world. Fossil remains of animals are constantly found, and of many of them we have no living representatives; but in the earliest monuments of man, in the Pyramids of Egypt, and in Eastern Temples, we find some animal remains which have endured for centuries, and they correspond, in every particular, with the living races which inhabit the globe now.

Verses 22, 23—"AND GOD BLESSED THEM, SAYING, 'BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY, AND FILL THE WATERS OF THE SEAS, AND LET THE FLYING CREATURES MULTIPLY ON THE EARTH.' AND THE EVENING CAME AND THE MORNING CAME THE FIFTH DAY."

God pronounced his blessing on them that they should be fruitful. God did not verbally command these creatures: he ordered the law which influenced them. Remember that this dialogue form occurs often with reference to the workings of Deity, and its sense may be illustrated from this passage. The flying creatures were to "*multiply on the earth*;" all sea-birds come on shore to lay their eggs, and this verse will be a key to verse 21, as translated in the common version, where it erroneously says, "*the waters brought forth the fowl*."

Verses 24, 25—"AND GOD SAID, 'LET THE EARTH BRING FORTH LIVING CREATURES ACCORDING TO THEIR KINDS, CATTLE, AND REPTILES, AND WILD BEASTS, ACCORDING TO THEIR KINDS,' AND IT WAS SO. FOR GOD MADE THE WILD BEASTS ACCORDING TO THEIR KINDS, AND CATTLE ACCORDING TO THEIR KINDS, AND EVERY REPTILE OF THE GROUND ACCORDING TO ITS KIND: AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD."

Cattle is one of those marked and obvious appellations for a division of animals, which though popular, is also truly scientific. All cattle are fit for the food of man, and afford him various aids, as milk, wool, or hair. None of them live *naturally* on flesh, and they all possess that remarkable arrangement which enables them to chew their food twice; this power proceeds from their having four stomachs, and means for getting the partly masticated herbage under the power of the teeth after having been swallowed. "Reptiles of the ground."

These are Tortoises, Toads, Frogs, Serpents, Crocodiles, &c. They are all cool-blooded animals, and move near the ground; in most of them the motion is either slow, or if rapid, not capable of being continued for any length of time. Wild beasts according to their kinds." Many of these creatures are carnivorous, living upon flesh by nature; they are much less numerous and productive than the animals which are more useful to man, and are also more confined to certain spaces in the world. Visionaries have attempted to prove, that when man sinned, the animal tribes were degraded along with him; that the carnivorous creation were herbivorous before. The wonder which is here tried to be established is not in character with itself; for Lions and Tigers to be made flesh eaters in consequence of man's sin, while Camels, Oxen, and Sheep, should still live on vegetables, is inconsistent. But it is said that scripture says creation shall return to its pastoral state, and to prove this anticipation, Isaiah 65, 25 is quoted, viz:—"The Wolf and the Lamb shall feed together, and the Lion shall eat straw like the Bullock;" or again Isaiah xi. 6, 7, 8. Those who can read those splendid eastern picturings, of the effect of righteousness in bringing about peace and harmony, as literal representations of things to come, must know but little of the style of the Hebrew writers. It is manifest that the whole organization and anatomy, both exteriorly and interiorly, should be altered, before these animals could feed as the Millennium poets expect they will. These creatures with their present formation were pronounced "good" by their Maker; we have no account of any change in their natures having taken place at all, and indeed the carnivorous animals, which are as far as we can see, perfect as such, would be very imperfect creatures in their structure, if they were to be vegetable dieters. These speculators on the fall of animals say, that man is the most brutal of creatures, yet they have before them the Tiger, and many other animals whose natural instincts seem cruel; the cat's persecution of a mouse has often been remarked on, yet we have no account of the moral degradation of that animal.

I am, Sir, &c.

A LEARNING TEACHER.

*(To be Continued.)*

## THE NEW YEAR, 1832.

TO OUR READERS.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW CHRISTIANS,

By the blessing of a gracious providence, *we* have been permitted to close the second year of our humble labours, and *you* have completed another year of your earthly pilgrimage. This stated revolution of time, is peculiarly calculated to awaken salutary feelings and right thoughts. We pause, like travellers upon an eminence, and alternately look back upon the country through which we have passed, and forward upon that which we are about to enter. In the retrospect, we behold a confused and mingled mass of pleasures and pains, of sins and duties, of hopes and fears; and nothing is distinct and clear, but the unwearied, all-pervading mercy of the Lord. Many of us have experienced peculiar and signal instances of favour or deliverance; and all of us have been blessed infinitely beyond our deserts. Whilst "the judgments of the Lord" have walked abroad upon the earth in the appalling form of a destructive Pestilence, we are still "in the land of preparation," spared to our kindred, to duty, and to hope.

But it is greatly to be feared, that in a review of the year that has just terminated, we have not merely great cause for *gratitude*, but likewise for *regret*. Can we seriously and honestly say, that we "have walked as it becometh the children of so many mercies?" We are one year nearer to the grave, nearer to eternity: have we like "wise men discerned both time and judgment?" Or have we not, like fools, forgotten both, and lived as if time would never have an *end* or judgment a *beginning*? Probably we have not been *worse* than in former years—possibly we have not committed any great crimes—it may be, that we are at least as good as those around us: but we should not be stationary in virtue—we ought to "grow in grace." We should not compare ourselves with the imperfect standard of what we *have* been, or with what others are, but with what we ought to be! We should not rest satisfied, with the negative merit of not being *positively bad*; we ought to be *positively good*. Let us put the question seriously

to ourselves, as rational and accountable beings, whether we have been during any part of the past year, in such a state as we would wish to be, when summoned to appear in the presence of our final Judge? I fear our hearts must answer, that we have not. And were we at any portion of that period certain, that *we* should not die, more than the thousands who have *paid* the debt of nature? True, we are *yet here* by the kindness of Providence, but *where might* we have been! Oh! it is awful to think upon the uncertain state in which we have stood—and the little improvement which we have made of our time, our talents and our opportunities. It is awful to reflect, that we might have been called into the presence of the living God, “with all our imperfections on our heads.”

Let the state in which we *have* stood, teach us a lesson of wisdom for the *future*; that we may “discern both time and judgment.” Believe us—nay, we should rather say, *feel* in your *hearts*, for you *do believe*—that we have no certain tenure of our lives—“we know not what a day or an hour may bring forth.” Life is always uncertain; but in the present times it is peculiarly so. Death is walking abroad over the earth, clad in more than his wonted horrors. Thousands and tens of thousands, of all ages, ranks, and characters, have been his victims. Yet *we are here*! What then, shall we become *presumptuous* because we have been *favoured*? Ought we not rather to calculate on the probability, that *our* time of suffering will soon arrive? Which of us can say, that he shall ever see the return of this admonitory season? The hand which now writes may be mouldering into dust—the heart that now beats anxiously for your welfare may have given its last throb—aye, and the eye too, that now reads may be sealed in darkness, long ere the earth shall revolve another annual round. That we shall not all *die* during the present year is almost certain; that we shall not all *live* is equally sure. But upon whom shall the lot fall? Upon him who writes or upon him who reads? Alas! we *know* not—and *as* we know not, *each* of us should stand prepared! Were we even *certain* of extended life, we should not allow the duties of one period to press upon those of another—for every hour, every week, and

every year, has more than enough of duty for itself. It is, therefore, in every point of view, criminal and absurd, to postpone the great preparation for death—repentance and newness of life. Let the commencement of this year be, as it were, a new era in our existence. Let it be a point, to which we shall always look back with pleasure, as that at which we completely forsook our follies and our crimes, at which we *really* began to live like beings who had hopes beyond the grave.

The world in which we live is full of warning and instruction. Disease, and want, and sorrow, have spread themselves over the mightiest empires of the earth. The industry of the merchant, the skill of the artisan, and the persevering toil of the peasant, bring not the accustomed rewards of competence and peace. We have seen, in our native land, thousands ready to perish of famine, in the midst of abundance; and their spirits broken down by the very charity that prolonged a wretched and hopeless existence.

But these things are trifling, in comparison with the social and moral evils that afflict our unhappy country. The deadly rancour of religious and party animosity has poisoned all the fountains of social life. Not only is the land divided into two great factions, boasting of exclusive patriotism, and profaning the sacred name of religion, whilst they are daringly trampling upon its most hallowed precepts; but even the peace of the domestic circle is invaded by the pestilence of a gloomy enthusiasm, and the generous spirit of youth is seared and withered by its destructive influence. These subjects suggest a thousand reflections, in which we have neither time nor space to indulge: but, we may venture to urge upon you, brethren, in the midst of so much hollow pretension to patriotism, the necessity of cultivating its genuine spirit—the spirit of social equity and brotherly love: and whilst various sects and parties around you seem to think that they best evince their love of God by their hatred of man, let it be your better part to prove that you are the disciples of Christ, by cultivating his spirit and obeying his commandments. As *rational* Christians we ought to maintain the dignity of our profession, by the purity of our lives; and whilst many deny us the Christian *name*, let us refute their unchari-



table calumny by our Christian *practice*. They may decry virtue, and talk of "a faith without works;" be it our humbler part "to show our faith *by* our works."

We have much cause of gratitude to God in the steady advancement of rational Christianity, during the last year, in the province of Ulster ; and, indeed, generally, over the world. The civil rights of the persecuted Remonstrants have been recognized and secured by an equitable government, and their congregations, generally speaking, are beginning to enjoy the blessings of tranquillity. A rational zeal has been awakened every where, and a delightful attention to the public and private duties of religion, is rapidly gaining ground. Nothing is wanting to the most gratifying success, but continued perseverance and generous sacrifices. One new Congregation, highly respectable for its numbers, its intelligence, its social and moral estimation, and its energy, has been established in Ballymoney; and the present year, we rejoice to believe, will add several other respectable societies to the ranks of Religious Liberty and Truth.

May the year which God has permitted us to begin, be spent in his fear and service ; may peace be preserved in our country, and "prosperity within our Zion;" and may the spirit of grace sanctify all our hearts and all our ways ! Pledging ourselves to redoubled exertions for your instruction and improvement, we cordially wish you, brethren, A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

EDITORS.

---

### Intelligence.

We understand that the Presbytery of Antrim have fixed the first Thursday in February for the installation of the Rev. John Scott Porter, in the First Congregation, Belfast.

## OBITUARY.

On the 6th November, James Boyd, Esq. The sorrow occasioned in the town and neighbourhood of Lurgan, by the removal of this excellent man, is deep and general. Silently, but expressively, does each individual, by the sadness of his countenance, testify, that in one way or another he has lost a friend. Few men from nature, shared more liberally in the endearing and ennobling, qualities of the heart, and none ever cultivated them with greater assiduity. To both old and young he was a pleasing companion—to the poor a bountiful benefactor—to all a friend. Associated at an early age with the Volunteers of Ireland, he adopted their sentiments on civil and religious liberty; and these through times truly perilous and eventful, he maintained with firmness and consistency. His principles were not to be shaken by favour or fear; and whilst others veered with the changes of time and the atmosphere of place, he held fast his integrity. As a man of business he was upright and honourable. His engagements and word he held most sacred, and for no earthly consideration would he entertain the violation of them. In his estimate of mankind he may have been too confiding, and in his munificence not at all times discriminating: but this arose from the overflowing benevolence of his soul—the sympathies of the heart would not be restrained by the cold calculations of the head. In the bosom of his family he has left an example worthy of imitation. In all the relations of husband, father, and master, he was kind, indulgent, and forbearing.

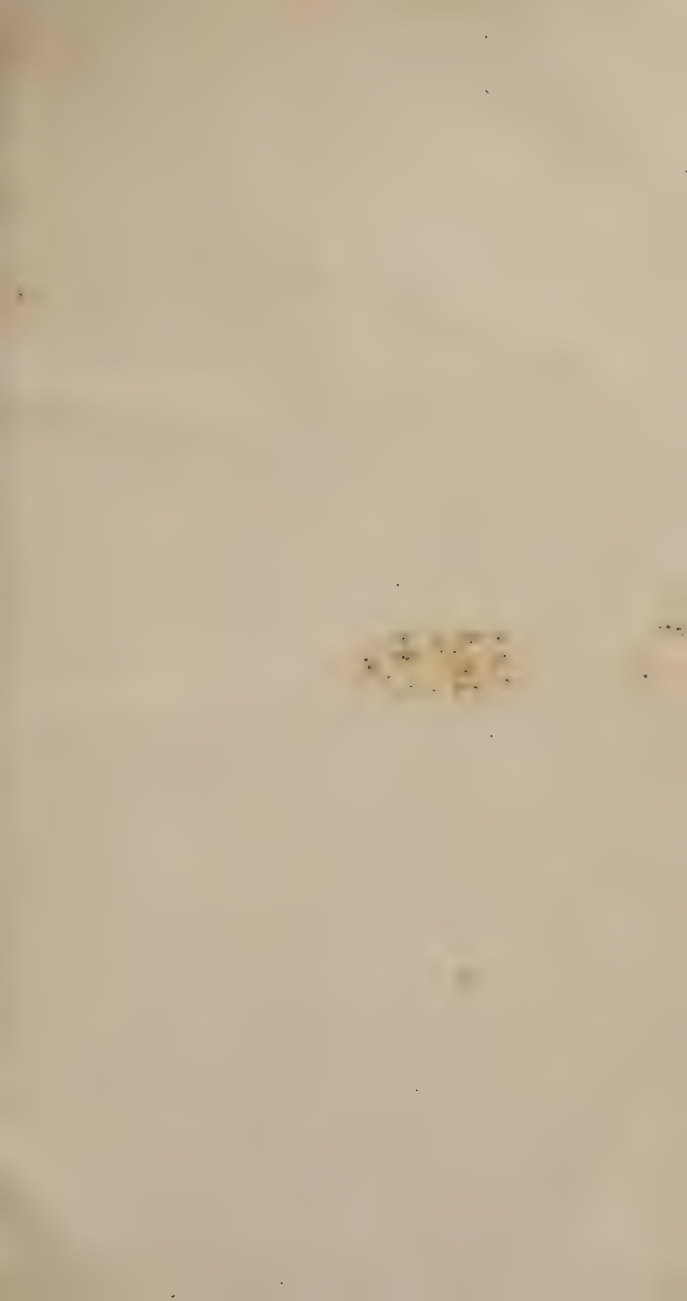
---

 TO CORRESPONDENTS.

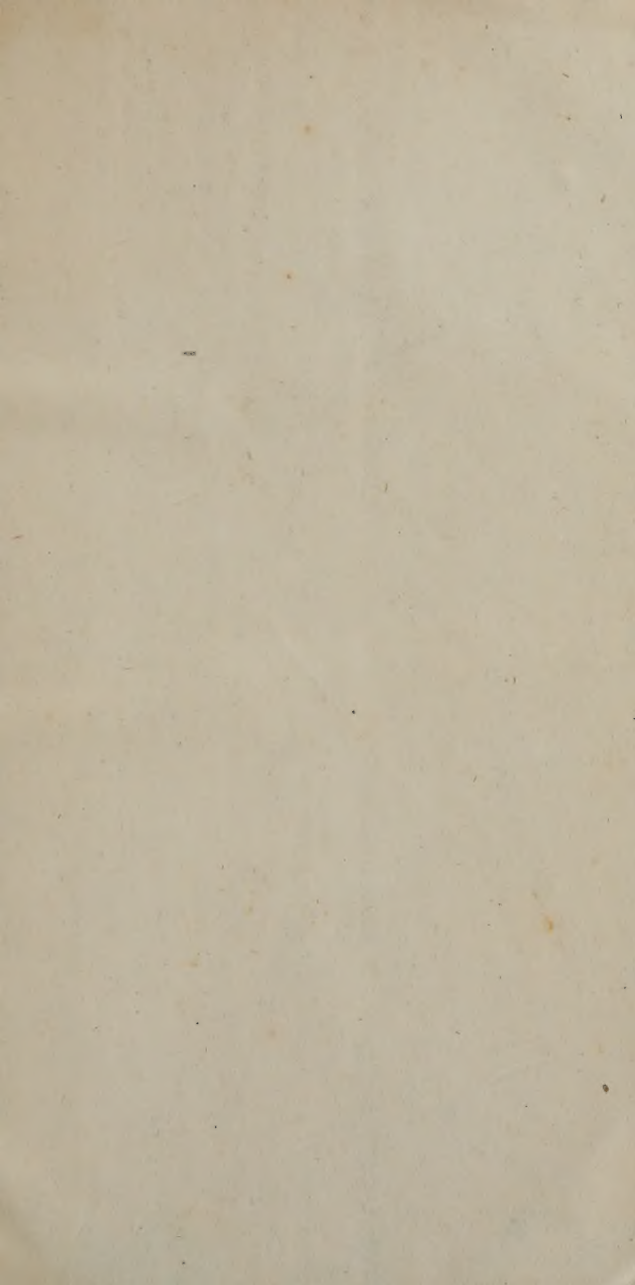
We have to apologize to our Correspondent a 'Learning Teacher,' for having left out some parts of his communication. The parts omitted were passages from Scripture without any explanation, or a very short one, and as there did not seem to us any peculiar reason for inserting them, we omitted them to make room for other articles. We would suggest to him that it would be better for him to confine his remarks to such verses as he may think to require explanation or illustration.

Alumnus has been received. The letters to and from Mr. Jefferson, have appeared so often in Newspapers, &c., that we do not think it necessary to re-print them.

END OF VOL. II.











GTU Library



3 2400 00256 5962



